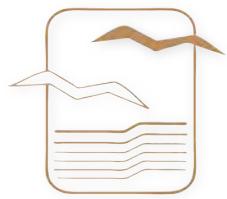




LIFE ~~on the Pamlico~~

Preserving North Carolina's Coastal Heritage Through Oral Histories





A Publication of
Beaufort County Community College

LIFE *on the Pamlico*

Preserving North Carolina's Coastal Heritage Through Oral Histories

LIFE ON THE PAMLICO

Cultural Studies
HUM 120

Suzanne Stotesbury
EDITOR

James E. Casey
DESIGNER

Amber Revels
COPY EDITOR

2013

A large, stylized letter 'W' in a brown, serif font, likely representing the word 'Welcome'.

Welcome to the 2013 issue of *Life on the Pamlico*. New and exciting things are happening with our publication, and we are happy to share them with you!

Students in my Cultural Studies class at Beaufort County Community College this Spring semester have worked very hard writing biographies and stories of local interest for this year's edition. Over the course of the semester, they have learned and implemented interview and research skills to bring the very best to this edition of our publication.

A new addition to the Life on the Pamlico repertoire is video, an addition suggested by our designer James Casey. Our first "preview video" using interviews the students conducted has been added to our homepage and additional videos of some interviews have also been posted. It is the staff's desire to include more multimedia elements in future editions.

Students wrote stories on a wide variety of topics this year. Inside, readers will learn about the life of a family of fisherman from Belhaven, Washington business owners who bring a different type of cultural flair to the area, and how one octogenarian couple continues to build a thriving relationship in Pinetown. A successful saxophonist shares a story of his unique relationship with his instrument, and the tales of farmers, teachers, and home-makers who have lived in Eastern North Carolina have all been preserved by the articles written by the students in this course.

This year's edition also includes stories based a little farther away from the Pamlico River area including a Martin County urban legend, a bed and breakfast in Greenville, and non-profit organizations in the area that strive to help others. Please read on to learn about these and other pieces of the cultural heritage of life on the Pamlico and Eastern North Carolina. The students, staff, and I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Life on the Pamlico.

Suzanne Stotesbury, Editor

Contents

<i>Welcome</i>	iii
Annie & Robert “Bob” Price	1
<i>Arlene Griffin</i>	
Pinetown	5
<i>Arlene Griffin</i>	
Clarice Moore	7
<i>Amanda Stanley</i>	
Local B & B's	10
<i>Alonza Lee</i>	
Amanda Smith	12
<i>Latrell Broughton</i>	
Legend of the Pettiford House	16
<i>Stephanye Norman</i>	
Benjamin M. Taylor	18
<i>Asaer Rodgers-Wilkins</i>	
A Man & His Saxophone	21
<i>Asaer Rodgers-Wilkins</i>	
Marie Caroline Cayton Poore	23
<i>Sarah Poore</i>	
Tobacco Farming in NC	28
<i>Sarah Poore</i>	
Jonathan Norfleet	30
<i>Robin Walker</i>	
Washington Montessori Public Charter School	33
<i>Valerie Everett</i>	
Dora Swanner	35
<i>Arlene Griffin</i>	

Contents

Trinity Episcopal Church <i>Victoria Hamilton</i>	40
Bishop Jessie Thompson, Jr. <i>Avery Thompson</i>	42
Heriburto Chavez <i>Latrell Broughton</i>	46
Lavelle Barrett <i>Martina Latham</i>	48
Farmville Dogwood Festival <i>Martina Latham</i>	52
Naomi Fulcher <i>Kelly Dwyer</i>	53
Washington Community Care Coalition <i>Kelly Dwyer</i>	55
José Jimenez <i>Alonza Lee</i>	56
Goat Showing <i>Zachary Cuthrell</i>	59
Legend of the Screaming Bridge <i>Robin Walker</i>	61
Debbie Everett <i>Valerie Everett</i>	62
Mattie Virginia McCray <i>Stephanye Norman</i>	66
Lonnie Hodges, Jr. <i>PJ Harris</i>	71
The Belhaven Canning Company <i>PJ Harris</i>	78

Annie & Robert “Bob” Price

“Up and Running Again”

Arlene Griffin

M

rs. Annie Laura Boyd Price has lived her whole life in Pinetown, NC. She was born June 22, 1939 to Ferrell Vance and Callie Boyd, and Annie was the oldest of four: three girls and a boy. After her school work was finished, Annie would help with her younger siblings, cook, and clean. While Annie was on summer break from school, she would help her father in the tobacco fields, but helping her mother, learning to cook and clean, and tending to the children was what she loved. Annie could hardly wait until she was grown and could have a family of her own. Living in such a small town where everybody knew everybody, she wondered if she would ever find the one man that was right for her.

However, Annie’s life changed when she was invited to a good friend’s birthday party in Pinetown. It was a small party with a



few family and friends, and she remembers it as one of the best days of her life. While sitting and talking to her friends, she noticed a young man across the room. She asked her friend who he was, and her friend told her his that name was Robert “Bob” Price. He was

from Jamesville, a small town 20 miles away. Before the party was over, they were talking, and he even asked her if he could take her to her prom. Soon, prom came about, and they had a wonderful time. Annie realized that she had found the man of her dreams, and

everything fell into place. They dated for a year and a half before Bob asked her to marry him.

Her high school graduation was at the end of May 1956, so they made plans to marry on June 1. Her heart was set on that day, so with hat in hand, Bob and Annie went to her father to see if he would sign for them to be married. Her father had no problem with the union because her 18th birthday would be on June 22nd. Bob and Annie were excited. They started to make their plans, and they started to fix up the farmhouse in which her father let them live. Annie said her father gave her a wedding gift of \$50. He

told her, "You can use this money for the wedding, or you can use it to buy paint for the house." Annie laughed as she recalled the conversation. "I told him I would use it to buy the paint," she said. In 2012, that \$50 would be worth \$416.59. After a small wedding and a brief honeymoon, it was time to get started with their new life.

Annie worked at The Charles Store in Washington as a store clerk. She made \$1 per hour. At the time women could only work 30 hours a week. Adjusted for current inflation, that would be about \$250 now. Bob worked for Weyerhaeuser in the cruising department making

\$40 (\$333) a week. However, Bob really wanted to do something else. He had considered starting his own business for some time, but he was not sure what he wanted to do and continued working for Weyerhaeuser.

One day as Bob headed to work, it started to rain. Bob started for home as he was unable to work. On the way, Bob decided to stop at the Everett's Community Store to get a soda. The man sitting behind the counter looked at Bob and said, "What do you think about taking over my business?" Bob felt as though his prayers had been answered. He was more than ready to give up logging; therefore, he decided it was time for a new start.

On a cold day in December of 1962, Bob and Annie opened Price's Grocery Store. This store was like any small grocery store at the time. One could find most anything. Bob and Annie sold meats, fruit, vegetables, and over-the-counter medicine. The store also had a grill where Annie cooked. She sold cheeseburgers, hamburgers, hotdogs, and milkshakes. Everyone loved her chili. "Even today, I still get ask for my homemade chill recipe," Annie said.

Things were going well for the family, and it wasn't too long be-



“It takes much hard work and determination to work for yourself.”

fore they welcomed their first child into the world, a son they named Bobby Jr. Six years later with the birth of their second, William Lane, they completed their family. For the time and their age, the young couple had already accomplished so much. “It takes much hard work and determination to work for yourself,” Bob said.

However, around 1971, Bob was itching to do something new. He got an idea for a new business; this one he would call Price’s Auto Sale. He decided to build a small metal shop behind the grocery store. It was there he spent time working on cars for the people in the community. As time passed, he got into repairing, painting and selling cars. In life, one has to take the good with the bad. At this point, life was about as it could get for the Prices, but that was about to change.

On March 1, 1974, tragedy struck on a cold and windy day. It started like any other day: Bob was

busy getting the guys started in the auto shop with welding work while Annie was preparing to open the store. Around ten o’clock that morning, there was a big explosion. Everyone ran toward the back of the grocery store to find the auto shop fully engulfed in flames. Everyone was in a panic to get the fire under control. While waiting for the fire department to get there, they valiantly fought the flames because of the larger tank of gas that sat on the property near the home and business. The Belhaven, Pinetown, and Washington fire departments all responded to this large fire, working together to battle the blaze.

Unfortunately, their efforts were fruitless. The heat from the

fire caused the tank to erupt its fury. The resulting fire took out their home and business. It was a blessing no lives were lost that day. The family had lost a lot, but they still had each other. They were determined not to let it get them down. An upside to the tragedy was that the family home and business were built out of concrete blocks, so while fire had taken a lot, most of the walls were still standing. However, the Prices still had more to work with than they could ever imagine. “I was telling someone just before the fire happened how much I enjoyed my fairly new washer and dryer,” Annie said. As they cleaned out the rubble, there was a pleasant surprise. When she got into that part





of house, she found her washer and dryer had never been touched.

The Prices started to rebuild with the help of family and friends “We all got a lot done. In about 5 weeks, we were somewhat up and

running again,” Annie recalled. As time passed, they steadily worked to recover their losses. Over time, they moved the family business more toward Price’s Auto Sale, closing down the grill and cutting

back on the grocery to make room for used parts and selling cars. For the next 25 years or so, they did just that along with raising their sons.

Even as they get older, the Prices remain active. Bob is still thinking of new ideas and business venues to pursue. Today they are enjoying life with their new found business, Price’s Subdivision. The Prices enjoy spending time with their now grown sons and their families, being active in their church, and going to the camp-ground to hear good music. The Prices are truly experiencing a happily ever after. By working together and having determination and a strong faith, they know they can do anything.



By working together and having determination and a strong faith, they know they can do anything.

Pinetown

Arlene Griffin

Offices in
Washington
1511 Main
Streets
to town hall

I have lived in Pinetown, NC for most of my adult life though I haven't given much thought on how it all got started. In my search to try to learn about my little town, I found there is very little information available. However, what I did find was very interesting.

Pinetown was started by Surry Parker in the late 1800s. It is unclear how Surry named the town, but it appears it was named "Pinetown" because he harvested a lot of pine trees in

the area. He owned many businesses, including a machine shop that employed about 100 people. Surry also owned Surry's Logging Company for which he invented many new tools.

Ms. Ida Strickland currently lives in what was Surry's house. She told me that when she remodeled the old house, she discovered that it was four rooms put together. Strickland spoke of the four barns on the property that she had taken down. Of the four, there was

one barn that was still in good shape. In it, she found many old tools made by Surry. Surry also owned the mercantile and had his own money according to Ms. Strickland. She described one of his coins: "It looks just like a quarter, but it had his name on it, and you could spend it at his store."

For the most part, due to Surry, the little town was booming. It had a grist mill, grocery store, barber shop, post office, and even a hotel. Around 1918, the population was 412 people. Pinetown had five churches: two Baptist, two Episcopal, and one Methodist. The town only had one school. It started out as a single, one-room school that grew to have three buildings.

Surry was one of the first people to own a car in Pinetown; in fact, he got a speeding ticket while on a trip to Washington, a larger town about fif-



teen miles west of Pinetown. Surry was arrested before the judge fined him \$10 for going 10 miles an hour. Surry supposedly laughed and said, "Here is \$20 because I plan to go out the same way I came in."

Surry loved his family, and he and his family spent many summers down at the beach. However, the family fun ended with the death of Surry's son in the late 1900s. There was no information available surrounding the son's death, but what is known is that the incident caused Surry so much distress that he sold all his businesses and moved north. Following



his desertion, the town's people had to leave the town as well to find work. Pinetown went downhill from there, leaving it like a ghost town.

Today, Pinetown remains small. The town still boasts many churches; the Pinetown Fire department and the post office still remain today. According to the 2010 Census Bureau, there are 2020 people in the area. The school continued on, but unfortunately it was closed in 1995.

Surry Parker did a lot for this little town in his early days. It's amazing how one person can make such a difference. He took this town from nothing but pine trees and turned it into a place where people wanted to come to live and to raise their families.



Clarice Moore

“The Cotton Field is Something to Remember”

Amanda Stanley

My grandmother, Clarice Moore, was born on September 1, 1926 in Beaufort County Hospital. Her parents were Mattie and Giles Moore. Moore has a sister named Ruth Moore. There was also a little boy born into this union named James Arthur Moore. He lived only to be a few months old before he died. Moore's mother also died when she was a little girl. So that left her father, Giles, to raise her and her sister.

When Moore was growing up, it was a very difficult time for her. Things were not the same then as they are now. With only one parent, her daddy had to take on the mother's role as well. Luckily, he had help from family, including her Aunt Betty and Aunt Claire. Betty and Claire were her daddy's sisters-in-law. Moore's dad eventually remarried a lady named Ms. Nicey. She had children as well so Moore

thought of them as her siblings, especially her step-sister.

Moore walked to school in Blounts Creek every day. Moore remembers during her walk to school that she would have to cross over a log laid across the creek. She couldn't balance herself while crossing the log, so she would fall

into the muddy waters below the creek. Regardless, she would have to attend school for that day. At school, Moore learned the basics, including reading and writing. This was something to be proud of during that time because most children back then had to stop going to school to help take care of their

families. But she was fortunate enough to attend high school in Aurora. She rode the high school bus then, so she didn't have to walk to school anymore. However, Moore had to stop going to high school after a year to work and support the household along with her father. She started working in the tobacco field and picking cotton. "The cotton field is something to remember," Moore said. She recalls the long rows of cotton they had to pick and how it took so much cotton just to reach one hundred pounds. Moore also said it was extremely hot work.

Growing up, a lot of people would call the Moore sisters "pretty little girls." They caught the eyes of many men around them. Her older sister, Ruth, was

the first to get married around the age of fifteen or sixteen. She soon gave birth to twin girls. Because these were her first nieces, Moore has a special bond with them. She helped her sister raise the twins. Moore's sister spent a lot time in Blounts Creek with her sister and father. Moore used to feed, bathe, and clothe Ruth's children until they were up to some size. Then her sister moved to Washington and had six more children.

Moore proceeded to marry Ernest Moore in 1945 when she was just only nineteen years of age. After marrying Ernest, her life changed. Moore moved to Bonnerton where his mother and her dad moved in with them. Moore's father, Giles, died on July 16, 1978 in Petersburg, Virginia. Moore

started attending Triumph Missionary Baptist Church in Blounts Creek. All of her kids and some of her grandchildren attend today.

Over the course of their marriage, Moore and Ernest had a total of eleven kids, including a set of twins that died during childbirth. Two children that preceded Moore in death were Lois Faye Moore and Donald Moore. She has twenty-three grandchildren and thirty-five great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Moore's husband, my grandfather, had a business in farming. He raised potatoes, corn, peppers, cucumbers, string beans, tomatoes, okra, collard greens, cabbages and tobacco, which kept Moore and her sister busy. She can remember playing a big role in helping out on the farm. Growing up as a child, I lived right beside my grandmother's house. It was easy access to walk right over and get something to eat or play with my little cousins.

Moore has a little thing about fish. She won't let any of the grandkids eat fish unless she took the meat off the bones first. She was afraid that one of us would get a bone stuck in their throat. But, she always had a solution if one got stuck. Back in the day grandma said "Eat some cornbread and



"Eat some cornbread and drink water. It'll get the bone out."

drink water. It'll get the bone out." I used to help my grandmother pick okras in the garden. I used to hate to pick okras because they would make me itch all over. I had to go in the house and take a wash up. One thing I really did hate was picking string beans and shelling them, it used to take so long because my sister and I was doing it all by ourselves.

When I was a little girl, my granddad used to come and get me, my sister, and my brother out the bed early every Saturday morning to go help on the farm. The boys used to prime the tobacco, and the women usually handed and tied the tobacco. The men used to pile all the tobacco sticks on the truck and take them to the barn to be dried out.

I remember one time I rode in the truck with them, and when we got to the barn and they started hanging the tobacco in the barn

from the top, snakes fell down out of the tobacco. I was the first one running out of the tobacco barn. My cousins used to throw those giant tobacco worms on me, and I cried like a baby because I'm terrified of worms and caterpillars.

My grandfather, Ernest, sold produce on the outside of King Chicken in Washington every day of the week except for when it was raining. Everybody in the town would buy everything he had on the truck sometimes.

Once the children had gotten older, Moore wanted to be more independent so she got a job as a housekeeper. Moore was cleaning older women's houses, washing their clothes and dishes or doing anything that needed to be done around the house.

Moore loves to crochet in her spare time when she's home alone doing nothing. She makes spreads, quilts, mittens, and more. Moore enjoys cook collard greens, pig tails, and some dumplings to go along with it; I especially like her fried chicken thighs.

Moore travels to where some of her children live out of town, such as Greensboro, Durham, Raleigh, and Virginia, but she's getting too old to travel far now. She likes living in Bonnerton because when she got married, that became home to her. She feels very comfortable where she's living right now, but sometimes she goes to live with one of her daughters every now and then just to get away.



Local B&B's

Alonza Lee

Offices in Washington
DC 202-223-8751
or visit our website at
www.bbb.org

Bed and Breakfasts are hotels or hostelries that offer a room for the night and a morning meal at an inclusive price. The Moss House, in Washington, North Carolina, and the 5th Street Inn, in Greenville, North Carolina, are two examples of bed and breakfasts in the area. Both the term "Bed and Breakfast" and the practice originated in Britain and became widespread in the early 1900s. They came to the United States around the mid-1960s, and today there are an estimated 30,000 B&Bs in the United States.

B&Bs are classified into three categories. According to the American Bed and Breakfast association, the first category is the B&B Homestay. This type of B&B is a privately owned residence where the owner lives on the property and rents rooms to guests. The primary use for the house is a residence, and breakfast is the only meal served to guests. It is

the least regulated of the three categories.

The second category, the B&B Inn, is a commercially licensed business that operates out a building that's primary use is to provide overnight lodging to the public. The owner may or may not live in the building, but again, breakfast is the only meal served. This category is subject to all local, state, and federal regulations.

The third category, the B&B Country Inn, is a com-

mercially licensed establishment with a full service restaurant that provides breakfast and dinner to overnight guests or the public. This type is subject to all local, state, and federal regulations as well. The distinction between B&B Homestay and B&B Inn categories is basically the primary use of the building, and those in the Country Inn category are basically restaurants that rent rooms. Even so, the universal distinctions of B&Bs to the average hotel are that there



is a host and the price of breakfast is included in the price of the room. The 5th Street Inn and the Moss House fall in the Homestay category.

The 5th Street Inn is located at 1105 East 5th Street in Greenville across from East Carolina University. The original owners of the house were Charles W. Scuff and his wife, Hattie. They moved into this beautiful three story bay house in 1929 and raised their three children there. The house has a vaulted front porch supported by two columns. However, guests enter through the enclosed sitting porch that flanks the house. There are four rooms at the inn. The

largest is the Chancellor's Room, which is the entire 3rd floor. It includes a queen size bed, a sitting area, and a private bath. The next is the Alumni's Room. This room was originally the master bedroom. There is also the Professor's Room. Both of the Alumni's Room and the Professor's Room also include a queen size bed, a sitting area, and a private bath. The last and smallest room is the Bachelor's Room. This room has a four post double bed, a sitting area, and an entertainment center. The bath is a few steps down the hall.

The Moss House is located at 129 Van Norden Street in Washington. The original own-

ers were Frank and Mary Moss. The house was built in 1902 and was turned into a B&B in 2001 by Mary Havens. There are four rooms. The Anchorage Room includes a king size bed, a sitting area, and a deluxe private bath. The Estuary Room has a queen size bed, a work area with a desk, and a private bath. The Pamlico River Room is the largest room, and it includes a king size bed, a sitting area, and master bath. The Tar River Room has a queen size bed, a sitting area, and a large private bath. The Pamlico and Tar Rooms are connected by back to back closets, and they form the Bridge Suite.

B&Bs are an alternative to today's corporate hotel or motel. The service they provide, the home feel to them, and the lower prices are attractive draws to today's traveler. The owners themselves benefit from meeting new people and the extra income.

To learn more about these bed and breakfasts, see their websites at 5thstreetinn.com and themosshouse.com.

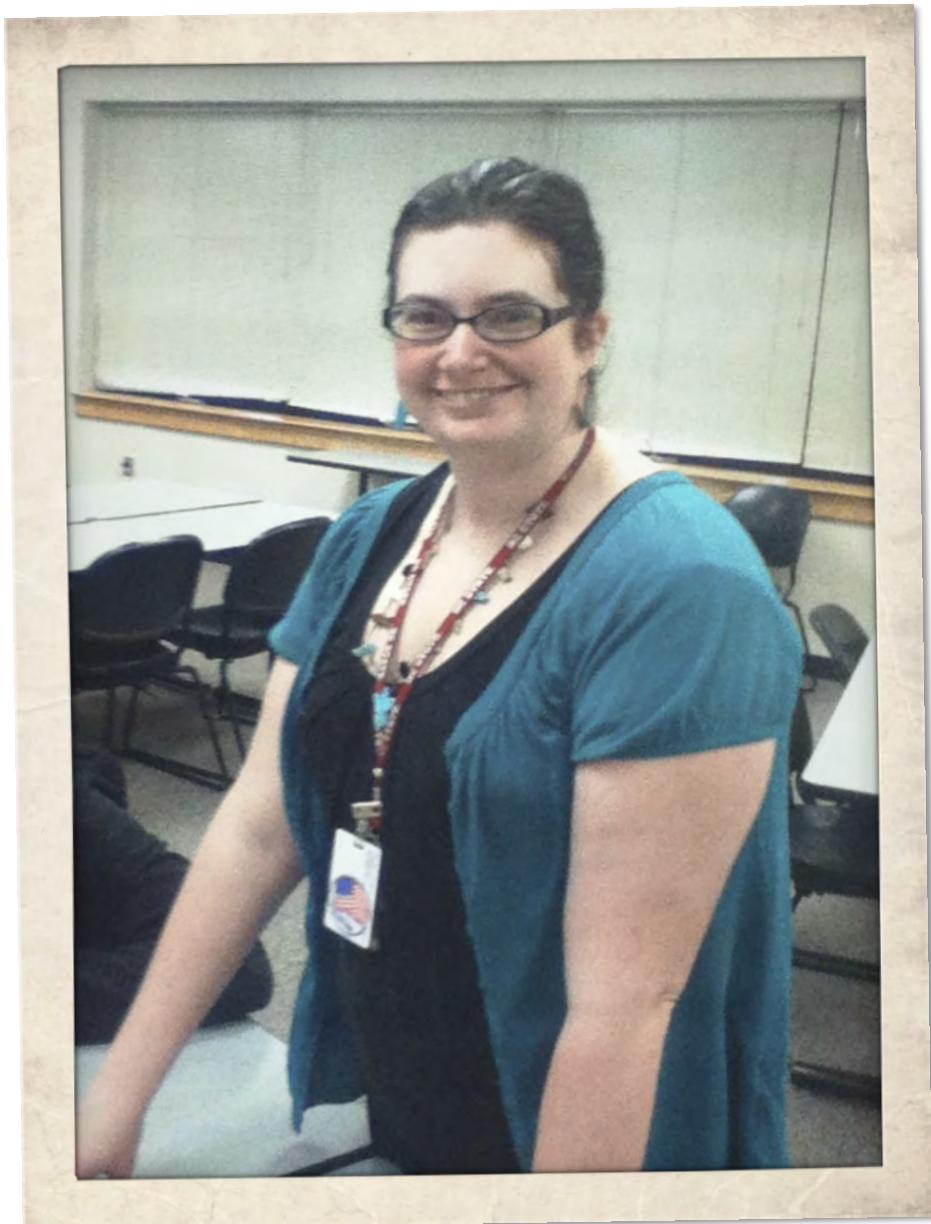


Amanda Smith

“Putting Everything on the Line”

Latrell Broughton

When people think of the Civil Rights Movement, what comes to mind is the marches in Birmingham or Selma—the events that achieved national attention. Very few people know what happened on the local level: the marches and protests that did not receive any further attention than a neighborhood newspaper article and a passing story in the local newscast. In the words of E. L. Woodward, “History itself touches only a small part of a nation's life. Most of the activities and sufferings of people...have been and will remain without record.” It's true; many people will never know about the trials that small communities have undergone in order to make some kind of lasting change, especially in the case of civil rights. Perhaps the saddest thing about the situation is that the current residents of these communities



have no idea how much historical significance is hiding in their backyard. It is up to local historians,

like Amanda Smith, to document our local history before it is lost forever.

Amanda Smith is a native of the area, having been born and raised in Washington. She says her love of history has come from many sources. Smith claims that she has always been a curious person who wonders why the world is the way it is and how things came to be, and she feels that studying history is the best way to gain a greater understanding of the world. She also cites her family as a major source for interest in history. Both her mother (a newspaper editor) and her father (a history buff who worked for the government as a city planner) exposed Smith to many museums and historical sites.

Going into her senior year at Washington High School, Smith originally wanted to be an art teacher because of how much she enjoyed her high school art class, but when she enrolled in Meredith College, she found that as long as she was helping people, it did not matter what subject she taught. After she got her undergraduate degree from Meredith, she got her first job teaching at Roanoke High School (now called South Creek High School) in Martin County.

Roanoke High School consisted mostly of low income African American students, and the school's total population amounted to around 400 (at the time, she

The civil rights movement in Williamston was an extremely significant part of Williamston's history and was comparable to the civil rights marches in Selma and Birmingham.

thought it was "tiny"). While she was teaching there, Martin County was looking into consolidating the school and re-merging it with another small school, Bear Grass High School, which was causing many arguments and disputes within the community. Curious as to why it was such a turbulent process and why the schools were separated in the first place, Smith decided to begin a research project on the Civil Rights Movement in Williamston.

The project began with orally interviewing many of the faces of the Williamston Civil Rights Movement, including ministers, the superintendent at that time, and anyone else who could recall the incident clearly. Smith has now compiled 30 of these interviews. While she was digging up information on this topic, Smith found

that the civil rights movement in Williamston was an extremely significant part of Williamston's history and was comparable to the civil rights marches in Selma and Birmingham, which she will discuss in depth in her book on the subject (which currently has the working title Williamston Civil Rights Movement) that will be published in Autumn 2014.

So why is Williamston not in the history books like other civil rights movements? Smith found herself wondering that too.

"Why is it," she asked, "that even people who live in Williamston have never heard about [Williamston's participation] in the civil rights movement?" One reason she gives was that the events in Williamston mostly occurred after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, so

the public and media had downplayed the significance of the civil rights movement in Williamston and instead focused on covering the death of the president. Another reason Smith gives is that there was no “antagonist” in Williamston that they were fighting against.

“They didn't have a Bull Connor (public safety commissioner in Birmingham, Alabama during the Civil Rights Movement),” Smith reasons. “Certain things just didn't come together for this to become a national focus.”

But many things did happen in Williamston during the movement. In Williamston, there were nightly marches and sit-ins. Through her research, Smith made a surprising discovery of how much the Wil-

liamston Civil Rights Movement was helped by people from the New England area, specifically Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

It began in November 1963, when Rev. C. T. Vivian (director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of National Affiliates) partnered with ministers in Williamston. On November 12th, 1963, 15 ministers from Massachusetts arrived in Williamston to participate in the marches. The marchers violated a court injunction, and all were arrested, including the 15 ministers from Massachusetts. However, after the assassination of JFK, the marchers were released in a temporary truce. While she was researching this, Smith had the opportunity to visit the surviving members of the New England

marchers and their families in Massachusetts in summer of 2012.

“They had monuments in Martha's Vineyard of the Williamston Civil Rights Movement,” Smith explained, “before you even had the monuments here in Martin County. There are a couple plaques in Martha's Vineyard of the Williamston Civil Rights Movement. Some of these people have even written books. I've even been told there's a reenactment every year in Scotland of the Williamston Civil Rights Movement.” Williamston was also again aided by activists from New England in 1964. A group of five women, called the Vineyard 5, came to Williamston to give the protesters supplies. The women then protested the hiring practices of the local Sears and were arrested.

An aspect of the Williamston Civil Rights Movement that particularly shocked Smith was the devotion of the younger members. After the ministers from New England returned home, the Freedom Choir of Williamston, a group of high school aged church choir singers, held a fundraiser to visit their congregation. In addition to that, they also participated in many of the marches and sit-ins, and many even lied about their age

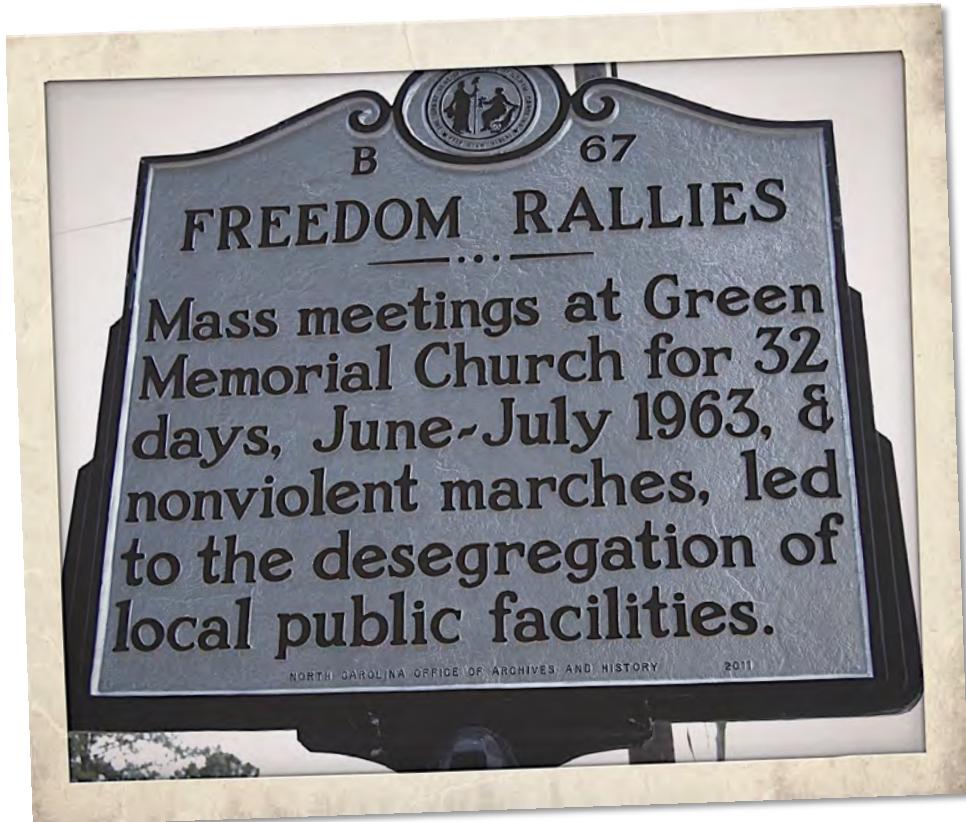


so they would be arrested along with the older members.

Smith was incredibly impressed with their dedication to the cause and said, "What gets me about some of these people is they're kids. Like 90% of them are people from high school. To think about people that are about [16], willing to risk everything, their life, their future livelihood, everything for them to be treated equally...you have 16 and 17 year olds going to jail, people younger than that lying about their age so they can go to jail, just sacrificing themselves and putting everything on the line so that they can be treated equally."

One thing Smith laments is the fact that many people had passed away before she had a chance to document what they knew about the movement. "As a historian," she says, "I would like to document as much as I can as quickly as possible and preserve it because there's no one else writing about this information. You can't find this anywhere. Without my work, this stuff would be lost. They next generation will never know about this unless we record it now."

Smith also volunteers in the community in addition to her book work documenting the Civil Rights Movement in Williamston and teaching. She regularly volunteers



in historical Bath, where she often gives tours that inform people of the area's rich history. (She was giving tours of the Palmer-Marsh house the weekend prior to this interview). She says she has a passion for educating the public of the significant events that happened around Bath in the Revolutionary era. She also likes hearing the citizens' stories of what it was like growing up in Bath because she feels as if the interaction is an exchange of information, which is also why she enjoys her work as a teacher. Smith has a love of learning, and she says that teaching, whether it is in a classroom or on a tour, is the best way of learning.

She also says that she has a passion for helping people, which she feels is satiated by her occupation.

Local history is an extremely important part of the identity of a community. If not for historians like Smith, our culture would slowly be lost to time as people who have experienced history would never get the chance to share their stories with the next generation. Even with all the things that go on at the national and international level, we need people like Amanda Smith to remind us that the things that go on at our local level also have major significance.

Legend of Pettiford House

Offices of the
US Library
of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Stephanye Norman

Urban legends are imitative of the age-old tradition of folklore or the passing on of stories from groups and characters or individuals. This urban legend began when a French physician named Julian Picot built a house in 1814 in Plymouth, North Carolina. Willie Drye, a

local writer, believed that Picot claimed his land after being shipwrecked on Ocracoke Island. Picot arrived at Plymouth around 1787.

"He bought a lot at the corner of West Main and Monroe streets in Plymouth, North Carolina, where he built the

house," Drye wrote in a recent magazine article. Picot could no longer afford the house and had to sell it. The title to the house and lot were transferred to a man named Robert Armistead in 1844.

When Robert Armistead died in 1857, his brother Tho-





mas S. Armistead inherited the house at the age of 14. He lived in the house with a 62 year old woman named Jane Ward. Thomas owned 18 slaves. People that previously owned the house had put in a tunnel in the basement that led to the Roanoke River. As the story goes, people believe that the slaves made their move at night when the ship arrived in Plymouth.

Plymouth resident Mr. Fred D. Norman says there is truth to this story, "Yeah, that's the old Pettiford House. I was told that the slaves were kept in the cellar and escaped at night heading toward the light-

house. The slaves escaped at night on the underground railroad."

This has not been confirmed; although, there is the trap door leading to the basement of the house. Some believe this house may have had two tunnels leading from the basement to the docks, where the slaves secretly boarded the ship to begin their journey towards freedom. During the Civil War, Thomas was unable to keep his house and ended up selling it to Reuben Pettiford, an African American brick mason.

Today, the Picot-Armistead-Pettiford House is

vacant and in disrepair. It is now owned by an Alabama family that plan to use it as an African-American history and culture museum. Before the museum dream can become a reality, the owners have to make changes to the house. For instance, repairing the rugged walkway, the shattered windows, the leaking roofs and paint on the outside of the house.

As an African American, I feel that it is important to have part of my ancestors' history in my hometown and to have this historic display open to the public so everyone as well as I will have the chance to sense the meaning behind it all.

The museum will probably have different artifacts and original pieces that I could share with my children. It would also be a good way to find out if there really was a tunnel. Not only that, but having a local historical museum would bring more tourists to our community.

The real question is: does it really have a secret underground tunnel?

Picot-Armistead-Pettiford House

Benjamin M. Taylor

"Band Was the Key"

Asaer Rodgers-Wilkins

Educator and saxophonist, these are words that describe a man who began a musical career banging on pots and pans in a small town that is considered the "brick capital of the world:" Sanford, North Carolina.

Benjamin M. Taylor was born on February 25, 1964 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He spent his early days living in Sanford, where the social atmosphere was a little different from today. Although the laws were changing in every other town, his town seemed to have stayed slightly behind. Taylor experienced the effects of desegregation at an early age. During his 1st grade school year, he went from an all-black school to being bused to a school across town. This took his family by surprise. He was in a classroom with children of all races. They soon realized the reasoning for his relocation. Taylor



was being relocated as part of a chosen group of people to satisfy the requirements of desegregation that were being promoted in his small town. While attending the

new school, he recalls being called the "N" word and being spat upon by children whose skin color was different than his. As further evidence of racial injustice in the

community, he also witnessed the results of a KKK rally, which left a burning cross one block from where he was living. Days later, he saw a man hanging from a tree, which made him a little frightened to go anywhere without being accompanied by an adult.

Life got better for Taylor when his mother decided to move to Washington during his second grade year. Being the new boy in school, he fought many battles to prove himself to the established

celled to first chair clarinet, first chair saxophone, drum line captain, and drum major. He said that by the 8th grade, he knew he wanted to pursue music as a profession.

When Taylor was a senior at Washington High School, there was a conflict surrounding the senior prom. He recalls that throughout the history of the school event, there had always been two separate proms: one prom was for the whites and one prom was for the

off without a hitch. Even still, the threats were still being made at the time of graduation. Taylor chuckled as he recalled that at graduation rehearsal at Kugler field. A car back fired and, "You should have seen us (Blacks) duck and hit the ground in fear of the unknown," he said.

It was during his 12th grade of high school that Taylor made a decision that shocked everyone in Washington High School. He had received numerous music scholar-

**He also witnessed the results of a KKK rally, which left a burning cross one block from where he was living.
Days later, he saw a man hanging from a tree.**

bully. He was in and out of the principal's office for one thing or another. During his 6th grade year, he was introduced to band, and music was something that he felt was needed in his life. Taylor found it took him to places that he never knew that he could go. He accredits its band as being a great influence in his life and a milestone for the accomplishments that he has made today. "Band was the key to me settling down and getting out of the fighting mode," Taylor said. During his years in band, he ex-

black. However, unlike today, these proms were not school-sponsored. They were financed by private individuals and held at various off-school locations. The graduating class of 1982 proposed to the school that there be an integrated prom, and it be held at school. The idea was approved, but the community was in an uproar. There were many death threats publically announcing that the black students were going to be killed if the prom was held. Despite the threats, the prom went

ships, but he chose to enlist in the United States Navy. When asked why he made his decision to go into the United State Navy, he said, "I knew many people who I thought were better than me who had gotten a music degree and were pumping gas at the local gas stations. This is something that I wasn't above doing, but I hadn't planned that for my final goal." He was obviously concerned about the job market for band directors. "People were teaching music much longer. Band directors loved their

jobs and would almost stay in them until they died. You could get a music degree, but there were no jobs available for that type of degree. So I said, ‘See the world,’” Taylor said.

That is what he did. He visited many countries while serving in the U. S. Navy. This was where the next chapter of his life began.

Taylor recalled that his days in the Navy were great overall. He started as an E-1 non-designated Airman, which meant doing any manual labor job that was assigned to him by his superiors. He chuckled as he remembered a time he stood eight hours in the line to get off the USS America, an aircraft carrier. “Liberty” (being able to leave the ship) was called by pay grade, starting at O-10 and working its way down to E-1. The aircraft

carrier was anchored about three miles away from shore, and this was the last available liberty before the ship left the port. The liberty launch (small transport boat) had begun to pull away from the ship. If he wanted an opportunity at liberty, he would have to make a running jump for the liberty launch. Taylor didn’t think about it; he went for it. He took a running leap from the ship, praying that when he opened his eyes he would be on the liberty launch. To his surprise, he made it, but he split his pant from back to front. He recalled that someone gave him a jacket to tie around his waist. For the next eight hours, he proceeded to have fun, ripped pants and all. He eventually progressed to the rank of E-5, a Second Class Petty Officer, but it was not easy. He decided after giving the Navy eight years of service he would not reenlist, so he hit the pavement as a civilian.

After Taylor became a civilian, he worked many odd jobs, trying to keep from reenlisting. During these years, he would work 16-hour days, but he kept his weekends free. He would play his saxophone at various places to clear his thoughts as well as make extra money. Taylor eventually decided to attend college. He finally ob-

tained a degree in music 14 years after his high school graduation. He obtained an academic and music scholarship from Elizabeth City State University, which totally paid for his bachelor’s degree. During his sophomore year of college, he became the band director at Elizabeth City Middle School after the band director unexpectedly vacated the position. He continued to attend school while directing the middle school band. After graduation, he took a teaching position at Jones Senior High School in Trenton. He is accredited with resurrecting a music program that had been dormant for five years while at Jones Senior High.

Then, Taylor received a call from his former college band director who asked if he was interested in being the assistant band director at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. He accepted the position. He taught the jazz band and was the music arranger for the marching band. While working at Lincoln University, he pursued a master’s degree. He then moved on to become the director of bands at Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee. When he left Lane College, he returned to Farmville, NC to teach band at Farmville Central High School, and



then later, he taught at various private schools.

Today, Taylor is teaching after-school music at Snowden Elementary School in Beaufort County and is pursuing a Ph.D. in Community Leadership.

When asked what his plans are for the future, he talks about his desire to open a community center where anyone can come and learn

how to play an instrument. "By getting this degree, I will be able to understand the different personalities of the people that will attend the community center and be better able to assist them," Taylor explained.

He hopes to change others' lives with music in the same way music changed his life. "As I perform, people often say to me, 'I

wanted to be in band, but we couldn't afford it,'" Taylor said. "As I teach in schools, I see lots of kids who want to participate but can't afford an instrument.

"I want to open a place where money will not stop children or adults from reaching their potential. I have seen the hardest of children change when they are exposed to music."

MUSIC TO THE EARS



STAFF PHOTO BY ALLISON BREINER

Jazz musician Benjamin Taylor plays the alto saxophone at Elizabeth City State University's annual spring concert Sunday night. The university's Symphonic Wind Ensemble and Percussion Ensemble performed pieces by Tchaikovsky, Glen

Osso and Frank Bencriscutto, who wrote the piece Taylor and the jazz combo played, "Two Movements" from The Symphonic Jazz Suite. The program was conducted by Floyd L. Robinson and B. Dexter Allgood.

A Man & His Saxophone

Asaer Rodgers - Wilkins

After my initial interview with Mr. Taylor, I contacted him and asked him if he would share memories concerning him and his saxophone. He chuckled. This is where the story begins: He states that he started on clarinet, but one day, a jazz band came to school and played and that was the end of his clarinet playing. His mom said if he wanted to switch, she was not buying another instrument; he had to see what the school had. The only saxophone available at school was the baritone saxophone, so that is what he played for most of his school years. Taylor bought his first saxophone from a pawn shop for \$89. He said it looked like it had been run over, but it played.

Taylor started to think after high school that he was at the top of his saxophone playing, and there was nothing else that he could possibly learn. Then one night, he was playing at a musicians' jam in Corpus

Christi, Texas. He put everything but the kitchen's sink into his solo.

Just as he was done, he looked around to see what the crowd thought of the great music he had played. It was then a seasoned, grey-haired sax player asked him, "That sounded nice, but what do you have left?" He asked the man what he meant. The man then took him to the side and schooled him on how to meter his solos. In retelling the story, Taylor shook his head and said, "It was a very humbling experience." He began to do some soul searching about his music. "This is an experience that I have taken with me to this very day," Taylor said. "I play my music from my heart."

After high school, Taylor joined the Navy. During his time in the Navy, space was very limited. There really wasn't any place for him to keep his saxophone, so he had to sleep with it at the foot of

his rack. During inspection times, he had to take it to the shop or walk around with it until the inspection was over. If it was found in the compartment, it would have been considered gear adrift and could have possibly caused the compartment to fail inspection; that was a weight no one wanted to hold on their shoulders. Luckily, he and his saxophone were never caught.

Taylor recalled a time when he was in the Navy, and the ship visited Italy. He said that on one occasion during Liberty (time off) he decided to take his saxophone off the ship and play in the park. While playing in the park, he looked up and noticed that he had drawn a crowd, so he decided to pack up and leave. This wasn't what he really wanted to do. He just wanted a little bit of some quiet time to himself; however, it was all but that with the crowd forming around him. All of a sudden an Italian man ran

up to him and shouted, "Don't leave; you are good for my business." The store owner offered Taylor and his friends free food and adult beverages for as long as he stayed and played. Needless to say, he said that was probably the longest period of time he has ever played his saxophone.

Taylor often found when he wanted to find a small place to play his saxophone, he brought a crowd. As musicians sometimes do, he often sought out a venue in which to play. Taylor recalls another time he went to a "hole in the wall" place and started playing along with the juke box. He stated by the end of the night he had made \$50 in tips. He said he was surprised at the money he made—all he was looking for was a place to play his saxophone.

Another time while on the U.S.S. America Aircraft Carrier, Taylor had found a little cubby hole in which to practice, and all of a sudden the captain of the ship approached him. He scrambled to stand tall and give the proper courtesies. "I was a little nervous,"

he said. It turned out that the captain of the ship was a guitar player and wanted to jam with him. After Taylor got over his shock, the captain got his guitar and played for a while. Then he told Taylor that he could use that space any time, and if anyone tried to run him away, to tell them to come and see the captain.

Another memory Taylor has of being on the ship is the time a pad on his saxophone became unplayable, and he made a pad out tape and bathroom tissue. He also made reeds out of plastic filmed cardboard. He made do with what he could because he was in thousands and thousands of

miles of water, and there was no store to purchase the supplies he needed for the upkeep of his saxophone.

His music has allowed Taylor to perform throughout the United States and various foreign countries. He currently performs all types of music for a variety of musical venues. Taylor is co-founder of a band called J13, which has performed for charity events and hired venues. This group has recently performed at the Washington Waterfront called the "Motown Review."

Some of this band's music can be found on the internet at www.bandmix.com/j13music/.



Marie Caroline Cayton Poore

"I Was Free To Do What I Pleased"

Sarah Poore

The population grew by one when Marie Carolina Cayton Poore was born near the town of Edenton, NC on November 24, 1929. After she was born, her family stayed near Edenton for only 3 weeks before moving to Beaufort County. Her family moved back to the area that they were originally from, Chocowinity. As a child, Marie lived in Chocowinity with her parents and nine siblings on a farm. When looking at the house from the outside, the house seemed like it could hold at most a family of five, but they made it work, housing 11 members of her family. It was a rough time for many families in the United States for it was the beginning of the Great Depression. Her family was very poor but strived to obtain the necessities for living.

Marie started school at the age of 6 at a little school house. She



described it like she was there yesterday. The school house was located right where the bridge is on Highway 33 in Chocowinity today. The school house had three rooms with pot belly stoves in each.

Teachers would have to gather the split wood in the school yard and keep feeding the pot belly stoves to keep them warm in the winter. The school only taught the 1st and 2nd grade.

“That’s why he had ten children: to clean up messes.” Chores were a way to help her big family work together.

“They did not stress the importance of spelling, and that’s why I’m a horrible speller now,” Marie laughed. She learned how to read from the teachers at the school and has loved it ever since. She remembers that all the children in the neighborhood would meet in front of her house because that’s where the school bus would pick them up and drop them off. Marie, her siblings, and the neighborhood children loved to play baseball in the mornings before the bus arrived. She remembers one incident when she hit the ball, and it flew at her older brother, hitting him in the nose and breaking it. She laughed and said, “He was supposed to catch it, and he didn’t.”

When Marie was not busy with her school work, she was working hard to help the family in the home and on the farm. She was one of the oldest siblings and helped her mother raise the children, cook, and wash dishes and clothes.

She stressed about how much

they had to wash dishes; “We would always wash and wash the dishes, a chore that was never completed and always a pain in the butt.” The girls of the family would wash everyone’s clothes by hand all the time. It wasn’t until Marie was older that her father purchased a washing machine. She said it was the first in the neighborhood and didn’t last very long; it burned out when everyone in the neighborhood would come over to use it. After it broke, her father did not bother to fix or replace it. “That’s why he had ten children: to clean up messes,” Marie said. Chores were a way to help her big family work together.

In her free time as a child, she liked to read mostly, especially *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. She loves the book and enjoys to read it still. She is excited now that the school board is making the book part of the curriculum. During the summer when it was really hot, her and her siblings would play under the house with large cucumbers pick out of their garden.

“My siblings and I would use the cucumbers as cars and trains; our imagination kept us entertained” Marie said. She spent most of their free time playing outside with the neighborhood children when she was not busy doing her chores. She also liked to watch movies. She had about 50 cents to go see one.

“I was very young when I went to the movies to see Gone with the Wind, and since that day, I have been in love with that movie and still enjoy watching it,” she said.

Her outdoor responsibilities were feeding her father’s hunting dogs, pigs, chickens, and cow. Her family would slaughter the pigs and chickens for food, and they used the cow for their dairy products.

She was always busy during the summer tending to the garden and fields. Her family grew collards, corn, beans, and tobacco. She described picking the tobacco in the morning and getting it ready to be cured in their barn that evening by tying it to sticks for hanging. It took about four to five days for tobacco to cure, and during the process, her brothers took turns sleeping out in the barn at night to keep the fire burning. She didn’t know much about her grandfather, but she knew he owned all the tobacco farms in Chocowinity.

When she wasn't picking tobacco, she was shelling beans for dinner for the next day and preserving the other crops either by canning them or making jams.

Her parents were complete opposites of each other but were the same when it came to being hard workers. She did not say much about how her parents were different; she only compared them to Kitty and Red from *That 70's Show*.

"Even though they raised their children during the depression, they did their best to provide all needs for their children, which they did," Marie said. Her father worked a little while for the state and the shipping yard. He quit those jobs because it interfered with his time to go hunting and fishing. He worked mostly on farms. Her mother took care of the children and worked only for a few months as a lunch lady after her children had left home for college.

Her family was and still is Christian, but going to church was very rare for them when she was growing up. Without transportation, getting to church was impossible for their family. During homecoming, her father would borrow his brother's car and would take her family church. Marie talked about all the food they al-

ways had during homecoming; "It was the most food I had ever seen at one time," Marie chuckled. Church was a rare treat for her family.

Many families were impacted by the depression and worked hard to provide for their families. When they did have a little money to spend, they would go see a movie and spend quality time with her family and friend.

A lot of things that we take for granted today are some things that Marie didn't have. They got most of the news from the newspaper and from school because they did not own a radio. At Christmas, her uncle made enough money to buy her and her siblings' candy. She knows that her younger siblings would not have remembered this, but she remembers how happy they looked.

"We didn't have bikes, only one that my parents bought for my

younger siblings to share, but that wasn't until I began high school," she said. Her family didn't get a radio until she was about to graduate from high school. "Times were tough, but we enjoyed what we had," Marie said, smiling. "Even though my family started to buy stuff when I became older, high school was where I began my life."

As a freshman, she was a cheerleader at Southside in Chocowinity. School did not have a lunch room; students had to eat in their classrooms. They also did not have a football team until she was a sophomore in high school, so she cheered for the basketball team. In high school, Marie was exposed to the option of becoming a nurse her junior year and would start working on her CNA in her senior year. She was thrilled at the opportunity and jumped into the program.

After high school, she was a very hard working young adult that

During homecoming, her father would borrow his brother's car and would take her family church. Church was a rare treat for her family.

was excited to be in the nursing program. She began her nursing studies at Taylor's Hospital in Washington. After studying at Taylor's Hospital, she transferred to a baby's hospital in Willington, NC. Her class was sent to Washington, D.C. for nine months to finish their education since North Carolina did not offer the education they needed to graduate. She was paid 15 dollars a week for her services; clothes , shelter, and food were paid for by the school. Once her schooling was over, she returned to work with Washington's hospital.

For fifteen years, she gave anesthesia to women that were in labor at Washington's hospital. She



learned from other nurses and doctors. Back then, one did not have to go through a 26 month program

to learn and get a degree in anesthetic studies. She said if she knew then what she knows now about anesthetist nurses, she would have attended school for it, but if she had gone to school, she would have had to go out of state since North Carolina did not offer an anesthesia program at the time. The longest session of anesthesia she performed was 6 hours. She gives the credit for her being a good anesthetist to a doctor at the Washington hospital she worked under.

She said, "I wish I could give the doctor rightful credit, but I cannot remember his name." She described him as being an incredible doctor that helped nurses be-





come more confident. She said that he was kind to all the nurses and very helpful. She was paid \$38 a week as a registered nurse. Even then, this was good money, but she needed more to support herself.

She obtained a side job at a nursing home when she was not working at the hospital. There she met a man named Fred Hunter Poore. He didn't work at the nursing home but always lent a helping hand by moving hospital equipment and helping set up the tables, dining ware, and silverware for the patients. They grew fond of each other and got married. They had four healthy children: Lisa, Hunter, Rosie, and Jennifer.

"I loved that he never told me what to do and never tried to change me. I was free to do what I pleased," Marie said. If they had waited to get married, she would have liked to have gone into the Navy to be an officer. "This is the only thing I regret not doing," Marie said.

In time, after working at night and taking care of the children during the day, she decided to do something different. She quit working at the hospital to become the director at the Beaufort County nursing home. It was the last of its kind in the state, and she worked there until it was shut down. Today, it is the abandoned

building near the health department in Washington. Many of her past employees still to this day refer to her as Mrs. Poore. She was very respected by her employees, and they still lend a helping hand for her when she needs it.

Today, Marie's life is very calm and peaceful. She is very proud that all of her children acquired a college education. She said, "They had it easy since Fred and I paid their way through college." She had to pay for her way through college. All her children have their own families now, and they have given her six beautiful grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Rather being called the traditional "Grandma" or "Meme," her grandchildren call her "Honeybee." She just wanted to be called "Honey," but her grandchildren just always called her Honeybee.

She spends her days reading, tending to her garden, and watching her favorite college basketball team, Duke. She has seen many changes in tradition and morals over the years, but she never thought in her lifetime that there would be a biracial president. She hopes that she will still have her will to walk until she dies and hopes she will be remembered as a kind soul.

Tobacco Farming in NC

Sarah Poore

Offices of the
USDA
in North Carolina

In North Carolina, tobacco growing has developed a long and rich history that has spanned almost three centuries. From 1880 until the early 1950s, farmers utilized mostly hand labor and mules to grow tobacco. On average, it took 900 man-hours of work to cultivate one acre of tobacco before 1950s. In comparison, it only takes 60 man-hours today using modern equipment, chemicals, and techniques.

What the tobacco farmer does today, however, is still essentially the same process that earlier generations followed. Back when it was a long process to grow and harvest the tobacco, there were many steps that all farmers in North Carolina followed to achieve healthy tobacco products.

In early January, tobacco farmers began to prepare seed beds for planting. The process usually included burning away undergrowth, tilling, and fertil-

izing. Burning was especially beneficial because it sterilized the ground while adding ash to the soil.

Most farmers mixed the

minute seeds with some soil and then spread it over the beds. The area was then "staked" and a covering placed on top to shelter the seedlings



as they emerged. In February, farmers planted their prepared seedbeds. Seedlings generally took six weeks to mature.

Farmers would begin transplanting their tobacco from seedbeds into fields, starting as early as April 1 depending upon the weather. Transplanting originally required three people: one to make a hole in the furrow with a hand peg, one to place the seedling in the hole, and one to add a water and fertilizer mix to the plant at the end. The invention of hand transplanters sped up this process. Farmers at this time would de-weed the fields using plows pulled by mules.

When the plants began to flower, farmers snapped the buds from the top of the plant. Later, buds further down the plant also required removal during the season. This allowed all the nutrients to go to the leaves instead of to the flowers and caused the plant to grow longer into the summer.

In late July and early August, tobacco harvesting began. First to be removed were the bottom few leaves. Subse-

quent pickings removed additional leaves up the plant about every two to three weeks afterward. In an average year, a farmer picked tobacco plants three to five times.

Mules hauled the picked leaves on sleds out of the fields and to the curing barns. My grandmother told me that the women in her family would tie the tobacco to sticks before curing. When the men came in from the fields at the end of the day, they placed the prepared sticks of tobacco into the barn and lit the furnace.

Between four to seven days, the farmers carefully raised the

temperature in the barn and caused the tobacco to yellow and dry out. My grandmother described how her brothers took turns out in the barn to make sure the barn would not burn down while the tobacco was being cured. Once the tobacco had cured, the farmers put out the furnace fire and opened the doors to allow the tobacco to absorb the natural humidity.

At pack houses, farmers laid out the tobacco, graded it, and bundled it into wraps called "hands." The last step was to press the "hands" flat before loading them on a truck destined for the tobacco warehouse. Because of the time it took to grade and bundle the tobacco, products did not go to market until as late as November. The other consideration for most tobacco producers was a possible increase in sale prices sometime in October, but not every farmer held their tobacco that late.

After their pack houses were clear of tobacco, it was time for the farmers to prep for the next season.



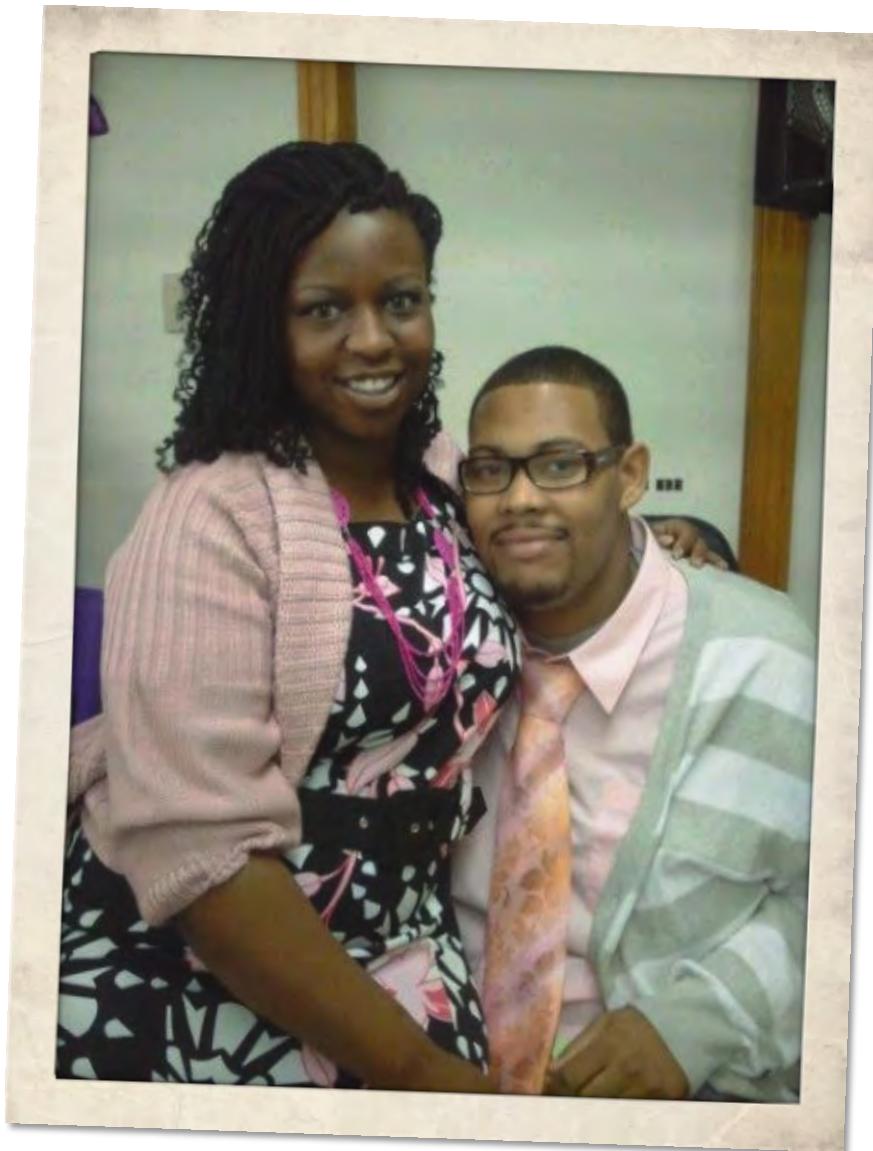
Jonathan Norfleet

"Tough Times Define Who You Are"

Robin Walker

In meeting Jonathan Norfleet, one wouldn't think that he has lived such a devastating life. Knowing his story really gives a person hope that people can make it through anything in life. Life started off pretty rough for Jonathan even before he was born. He was born on December 21, 1987, before his due date, following a tragic altercation between his mother and stepfather. He was the second to the last child for his mother but only the second child for his father. His father went on to have 14 more children after him.

Soon after he was born, Social Services took Jonathan and his brother from his mother and put them in foster care. A few months later, his stepfather was shot and killed. In the months following that incident, his mother was also killed in Goldsboro. As a result, Jonathan and his brother stayed in



foster care until Jonathan was five. Then, the Norfleets adopted them along with another set of kids. The

Norfleets had a total of 11 kids, and out of them, Jonathan was the fourth oldest. Just as things were

looking up, his adopted father died of a heart attack when he was nine years of age. He wasn't a bad child while he was in school, but he and his brothers did get in fights protecting his youngest brother.

His mom was very old school and believed that when children finished school that it was time for them to leave. She told them it was time for them to go, and she put them out the house. His brothers went to universities. He went to Pitt Community College, and he got a job at Kroger's grocery store. Jonathan had no place to stay, so he could sleep in his station wagon in between work and school. He soon earned enough money to get a truck, but he wrecked on his 18th birthday while picking up his cousin.

Having nowhere to go, Jonathan called his brother, and he told Jonathan to come to South Carolina to stay with him. However, before he made it to his brother's house, he went to his grandfather's to live. He did not agree with the rules that his grandfather set down, so he moved on. Then Jonathan went to stay with his aunt who was a homosexual. She stayed in a hotel with her girlfriend. After

a couple of weeks, he was done with it. He said, "I had to get up out of there because they were getting on my nerves." After that he went to stay with his sister for a while, but they couldn't see eye to eye on things. Jonathan finally got



to his brother's house after three months. Jonathan described his brother as the best friend in the world. It was while he was living with his brother that he met this girl named Veronica and got engaged. "She was the devil, let me tell you; she was just horrible. She took me for a loop," he said. He broke off the engagement and moved on.

Things then began to look up for Jonathan. He moved back to North Carolina and went back to school. He finished in two years. He then got a job as a computer

programmer in Pitt County. Over the next few months, he dated a few girls, but the relationships did not work out. He worked for ADT for four months, and then he got promoted to manager. Jonathan later reconnected with his best friend of 12 years. He had met Blondie at a Herring Festival in Jamesville, NC. He walked up to her and said, "God told me to tell you that I'm going to marry you." Twelve years later, Jonathan proposed to her after service at Finding My Way Fellowship Center one Sunday morning.

"God told me to tell you that I'm going to marry you."

In 2008, Jonathan met his birth father, Anthony Johnson, working at Convergys, a call center. They worked right beside each other, though they did not know each other, and Anthony did not really like Jonathan because he said Jonathan talked too much. One day, the phones went down, and they started talking. Anthony asked who Jonathan's "people" were and what his mother's name was. He started counting back the dates from when Jonathan was born, and he told Jonathan, "The last time I saw your mother, she told me that, 'You don't have to take care of my baby.'" Jonathan didn't know how it was relevant to what they were talking about. Anthony told him, "I'm not trying to

be funny, but you were that baby." Jonathan didn't believe him, and said, "You ain't my daddy." Anthony suggested he call his grandmother to ask her. When Jonathan called his grandmother, she told him that Anthony was in fact his father. Despite that connection, their relationship has remained strained.

Things changed again in 2011 for Jonathan when he got into a bad accident. He was driving on Highway 64 from Raleigh when there was an accident in front of him. He turned to the left, and his car hydroplaned into an abandoned car that was on the side of the road. In the accident, he broke his pelvic bone and tail bone and severed his aorta. Jonathan was in a

coma for two weeks, in the hospital for two months, and in a wheelchair for months after that. During that time, Jonathan had four or five surgeries and his stomach was left open for a few days to heal. He had two metal bars put in his waist, and now his pelvis has a titanium plate in it. He was told that he would not walk again, but he decided he was going to prove the doctors wrong. While still recovering, Jonathan would go to church in his wheelchair some Sundays and play the piano. His wife and mother-in-law would never let him over exhaust himself. Despite it all, Jonathan was walking by four months. Today he is a youth pastor of Finding My Way Fellowship Center, and he works at US Home Exteriors.

Jonathan has lived a tough life at age 27, but he never seems to let it get him down. When asked did he have any life lessons to share, he said, "If I learned one thing in life, it's that tough times define who you are. When tough times hit, you have the option to either duck and run or stand up and fight. I would rather go down fighting than to give up because life is too hard or unfair. That's the legacy that I want to leave behind for my children and the rest of the world."



Washington Montessori Public Charter School

Valerie Everett

In February of 2000, Washington Montessori, Inc. was granted a charter by the State Board of Education to operate an elementary Montessori school in Beaufort County. Currently, there are 290 students and 35 staff members. The campus consists of four buildings—two of which are environmentally friendly, a nature trail, an outdoor amphitheater, and a pond. The environmentally friendly buildings were designed by Innovative Designs of Raleigh, NC and include a day-lighting system of sky lights. One of the buildings also has rain water barrels to irrigate the planters and solar panels for extra energy. The other two buildings are commercial grade modular buildings constructed of materials similar to the permanent buildings.

The school incorporates the Montessori Method of teaching. The Montessori Method was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori who spent her lifetime studying the way children learn. Montessori education is based on the belief that children are individuals with their own strengths, needs, likes, and learning styles.

Montessorians disagree with the idea all children learn in the exact same way at the exact same time. They believe that to be effective teachers, they have to observe each child and figure out what the child understands. Then they decide what the next concept is that the child needs to learn, how the child learns, and what



things interest the child so that the child can use his or her natural interests and abilities to learn the concept. To achieve this, a Montessori classroom is not only filled with textbooks, paper, and pencils. Instead it is filled with a wide range of materials that teach different levels and concepts. A Montessori classroom will not look like a normal classroom; you will rarely find the whole class sitting with their books out looking at the teacher. Instead, you will see children - some in groups, some by themselves - working on different concepts and the teacher sitting with a small group of children usually on the floor around a mat. At first glance, someone unfamiliar with the Montessori Method might think the classroom lacks structure and sometimes may even think the classroom to be chaotic. The children are given a work plan and have to complete an assortment of educational activities just like in a more traditional classroom. The difference is that the activities will be at each child's maximum level of

development and will be presented and practiced in a way the child understands, and the child will have the freedom to choose which he or she does first. Montessori students have a choice as to what order they complete their assignments and which materials they use. Findings indicate Montessori students have more interest in learning, are more self-disciplined, have a greater understanding of truth and fairness, and are more creative, especially in their writing. They are also more independent, have a better understanding of concepts from grammar and story structure to mathematical operations, and have a deep understanding of and how geography, history, social studies, and science are all related.

As a Montessori school, classrooms at Washington Montessori are always busy; children are often moving around working and learning. Early lessons are taught with hands-on materials that address the child's developmental need for information to be presented in a concrete manner.

As the child becomes older, the materials follow their intellectual development and become more abstract. Lessons are often given in small groups, which allow the teacher to present the information at the skill level of the students and to assure each child's comprehension of the material.

Washington Montessori Public Charter School is a public school and is open to all children. There are no fees or tuition. To be considered for enrollment, an application must be submitted to the administrative office. An annual lottery is held during an open session of the Board of Trustees meeting in January before the upcoming school year, and names are randomly pulled to fill any available slots. Siblings of currently enrolled students are given priority.

Washington Montessori Public Charter School is located approximately three miles east of Washington off of Highway 264.

More information can be found on the school's website at www.wmpcs.org.

Dora Swanner

A Self-Reliant Lifestyle

Victoria Hamilton

Dora Swanner has been a resident of Beaufort County her whole life. She was born July 3, 1932 and lived in Chocowinity for her entire childhood and teenage years. The town of Chocowinity has grown and changed a lot from what it was like when Dora was growing up. Back then, the only businesses in Chocowinity were filling stations and grocery stores.

Dora's parents ran a tobacco farm, and as she explained, farming comes with a lot of duties. Her mother's name was Emily Cox Elks; she also grew up in this area. Emily Elks was a classic housewife. In today's society, many women work full time jobs and take care of the home so the idea of being a stay-at-home mom is something many people are not familiar with. Emily enjoyed reading, and Dora remembers seeing her mother read all the time. Dora's mother did





work for the Beaufort-Hyde-Martin Regional Library which is still around today. The BHM library used to have a bookmobile, which was where they would literally bring the library to people's homes and neighborhoods. Dora's father Charlie Mason Elks was the head of the tobacco farm and he

was the financial back bone for the large family of four children. Dora has three older siblings Jeanette Elks, Donna Elks, and her brother Charlie Elks. She said her relationship with her siblings was "very good" and that they didn't argue much because they simply didn't have time.

Dora, as well as her brother and sisters, spent a lot of time helping out on the farm. Dora can recall dreading working on the farm because of the hard labor that was involved. Her job on the farm was usually "handing tobacco." She described this as grouping the leaves together and passing them down the line to be hung on tobacco sticks. This had to be done to every single leaf of tobacco in order for them to dry out. The hanging of the tobacco was usually done in a curing barn. During the winter, Dora brought in fire wood, which provided heat for their home. Dora enjoyed going to school from eight o'clock in the morning to three o'clock in the afternoon because she got a break from working. There was little time for other activities as she spent all of her time either at school or on the farm. This is in great contrast to today, because today kids spend their time playing outside instead of developing an early work ethic.

Owning a farm is hard work, but for her family, farming provided a lot of the daily essentials. The farm was used mostly for tobacco, but it also included much more. The Elks had a garden full of vegetables, and they also raised chickens and cows. The cows had

The Depression came with a growing need to be more self-dependent. Dora's family did extremely well compared to a lot of the families during this time because of their self-reliant lifestyle.

to be milked every day, which was usually the chore her sister Jeanette had to do. The chickens and cows produced all the milk and eggs the family could ever need. The meals were usually made straight from the products that were on the farm. The vegetables

that were on the dinner table came from the garden and usually included string beans, beets, carrots, collards, cabbage, and cucumbers. These products greatly reduced the amount of money being spent at the grocery store. She does not remember much about her family's

grocery shopping mostly because they provided a lot of what they needed themselves. Dora's mother also made use of the feed sacks from the farm by using them as place mats at the dinner table. The Elks family made quick use of anything left over on the farm. During this time, the Great Depression was in full effect, which made life very difficult. The Depression came with a growing need to be more self-dependent. Dora's family did extremely well compared to a lot of the families during this time because of their self-reliant lifestyle.

Dora's family had many traditions as do many families today. The Elks family attended Trinity Episcopal Church in Chocowinity. The church was built in 1774, and it is one of the oldest churches that still stand today. Emily and Charlie expected their children to attend church every Sunday. The children also sang in the choir to fill seats because the church did not have a lot of members. Her



parents did not care if the children could sing or not; they just wanted to make sure every seat in the choir was full. The family spent a lot of time together, and her parents liked it that way. They had family dinners every night, and all of their children were expected to be washed up and ready to sit down and eat. Her family rarely if ever went out to eat in restaurants; the only exception was for special occasions, such as church events.

Dora told me she did not recall ever really celebrating her birthday. She knows her parents acknowledged them, but unlike today, there was no birthday party with cake and candles.

Dora remembers her favorite holiday being Christmas. She did not like it because of the gifts; she just enjoyed the time of year and being with her family. Her family went to church on Christmas Eve, which is a tradition that has carried on to my family. Dora got only one or two gifts for Christmas each year. She talked about a particular bracelet she wanted for Christmas one year. The bracelet was supposed to be what she called a "stretchable bracelet," but she ended up with regular metal bracelet. Dora expressed that it does not seem like much now, but back then, it seemed like the best day



out of the whole year.

Dora and her siblings attended school at Chocowinity Elementary. She remembers the school being segregated, but during that period, it seemed normal to her. She can't recall it being an issue. Her school followed many of the same rules in schools today. The students did not have a particular dress code or uniform policy. The school did not have a cafeteria, which is unheard of today. The school did have a small snack shop that provided a few items for students. The snack shop served milk, ice cream cups, nabs, and peanuts. The snack shop

did not have anywhere for the students to sit, so they stood around and socialized while they ate.

Dora said teachers were allowed to discipline students with paddles. The teachers rarely had to take these measures because students were much more respectful of adults at that time.

During the summer when school was out, Dora said she had a lot more free time. The farm was still where she spent a majority of her time, but she used to enjoy playing hide and go seek with her siblings on warm summer nights.

Dora remembers her brother

Charlie would ask Dora to hold the squirrels while he cleaned them. She did not enjoy this and often felt sorry for the squirrels.

waking her up at the crack of dawn to go check his squirrel traps in the woods. She found it amusing because he was older than her but too afraid to go out in the woods alone.

Charlie would ask Dora to hold the squirrels while he cleaned them. She did not enjoy this and often felt sorry for the squirrels. Dora said he did it for a good reason, though. Charlie sold the cleaned squirrels for a little extra money to the people working on the train. The train ran right beside their farm so it was convenient for the train driver to stop and pick up the meat from Charlie.

During high school, Dora attended prom her junior and senior year. Unlike today, she did not have to pay to attend, and her dress was not outrageously expensive. The prom was held in the agriculture building due to the fact that there was not a gymnasium at the time.

Dora also showed off her musical talent during high school. She taught herself how to play the pi-

ano, and she was asked to play for the chapel program in school.

Dora also began to date during her high school years. She said her first date was around the time when she was sixteen. Her parents gave her a curfew of eleven o'clock, and she never attempted to stay out past that time.

After high school, she attended Peace College where she studied business. She did not live in a dorm or apartment; rather, she stayed in a home with a family and a roommate. She never finished her degree in business partly because she met her soon-to-be husband.

She married into the Singleton family, and they held the ceremony at Trinity Episcopal Church. Dora and her husband moved to Tar Heel Drive in Washington, NC. Dora had her son soon after when she was around twenty years old. Her husband did flooring work and supported the small family. Dora had her second son at age twenty-five.

After her children where

grown, she got a job working for WITN. She worked in the traffic department for eight years. Dora then worked for Hamilton Beach as a secretary for seventeen years.

Dora got divorced but remarried into the Swanner family during her later years. Her husband Tommy Swanner was a salesman for RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company.

Dora now lives in Smallwood in Washington. She keeps herself very busy and involved with friends and family. She spends her morning working out at the gym where she says she enjoys the familiar faces and small family of friends.

Dora also plays cards once a week with a group of her close friends. She plays bridge, which is an older card game she learned from her mother as a child.

She spends most of her free time reading, and she also still enjoys playing the piano. Dora lives a very healthy lifestyle and enjoys the life of retirement from work and mostly from the farm.

Trinity Episcopal Church

Victoria Hamilton

Trinity Episcopal Church is in the small town of Chocowinity, NC. Trinity is a very small close-knit church. The church itself is very small and limited in the number of people who can attend Sunday service.

Trinity was built in 1774 by Rev. Nathaniel Blount, a resident of Chocowinity. Blount was sent to London to study for ordination. When he returned, he began to build the

church. The builders were Giles Shute and John Herrington, and they built the church a mile west of where the church is located today. Blount was very involved with the Church of England and the Episcopal Church. Blount died in 1816 and he was buried in the Blount plantation in Chocowinity. Blount was highly known and was the “sole Anglican priest in the state.”

Trinity was referred to as Blount’s Chapel until the 1820s when the name was changed. The church was moved due to vandalism in 1939. The church was moved on log rollers pulled by horses to its current location. The church is now located at 182 NC Hwy 33 West in Chocowinity.

Many of our founding fathers were Episcopalians, such as George Washington and



Scanned by
Suzanne L. Parker
Reflected Images
www.reflectedimages.com

Thomas Jefferson. The Episcopal Church is self-governing but has a great relationship with the Church of England and thirty other Anglican Churches. Trinity is a small part of a large Anglican Community that is all over the world. The beliefs of the Church include that "God is the source of all life, that through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, sins are forgiven and their lives are brought into closer union with God." Episcopalians also believe that "the Church is the body of Christ, and that the Church is holy, catholic, and apostolic, continuing the teaching of Jesus through the apostles to this day."

Trinity also has a cemetery at a different location in Chocowinity. In the mid nineteenth century, land was given to Trinity to serve as a cemetery. Many Revolutionary and Civil War veterans are buried in this cemetery. The Major General Bryan Grimes is buried in this cemetery and is a popular attraction for Civil War historians. In 2011, the cemetery was added to the National Registry of Historic

places listings in Beaufort County.

Trinity still stands today but looks much different than it did in 1774. In 1949 after being moved to its new site, Trinity added a two story addition onto the church. The new addition provided an area for offices, Sunday school rooms, and a kitchen.

On October 3 1999, Trinity's congregation buried a time capsule. The capsule was buried during the celebration of the church's two-hundredth birthday. The church members celebrated by dressing up in historical outfits. The time capsule contains memories and letters written to relatives to read when it is opened on the first Sunday of October 2049. I've been a member of Trinity my whole life, and my mother put letters for me and my brother in the capsule. I calculated it, and I will be around 55 years old when it is opened.

I've had many experiences at Trinity, including Sunday school classes and many church services. Sunday school begins before the church service on Sundays. Sunday school offers knowledge of Christ for

young children through arts and crafts as well as readings from the Bible. Trinity offers many services to members, such as refreshments after the service, and holds many celebrations throughout the year for holidays. The major holidays I remember celebrating at Trinity include Christmas, Easter, and Palm Sunday. Trinity hosts an Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday as well as a huge feast. The Christmas Eve service is something everyone should experience. Christmas Eve service takes the focus off the hustle and bustle of Christmas and the church comes together to celebrate the joyous event.

Trinity's small congregation is very family-oriented and always open to new members. This church has a great history, and it is continuing to create new history every day. The small church may look much different than it did in 1774, but the values and beliefs are still very much the same.

*For more information
about Trinity, please visit
www.trinitychocowinity.org.*

Bishop Jessie Thompson, Jr.

"I Will Let Nothing Separate Me From the Love of God"

Avery Thompson

Bishop Jessie Thompson, Jr. was born August 18, 1933 in Hamilton, North Carolina. Hamilton is in Martin County. Thompson's parents were Jessie and Laura Thompson. They had eight children, and Thompson was the next to the second oldest of them. The family moved to Washington when Thompson was 12. He worked in his younger years on his parent's farm raising chickens and hogs. He also worked as a paper boy and carried groceries. Thompson attended P.S. Jones, which was the school for blacks for kindergarten through twelfth grade. He always worked hard and helped his parents.

In 1945, Thompson met Pearlie Murray at P.S. Jones, and they started their relationship not too long after they met. She was his "sweetheart," and he had never met anyone like her. They dated



for about five years before getting married on December 5, 1950. Thompson was only 17, and she was 16. They soon bought a house in the neighborhood of Washington Heights, which was near where

Eastern Elementary School is now. They didn't stay there long because they wanted to move into the town of Washington, so they moved into a house on Fleming Street. They knew they wanted a family and

wanted a comfortable living. On August 23, 1955, they had their first born son named Jesse Earl Thompson. Their second son, Rickey Darien Thompson, was born on August 9, 1960.

In 1955, Thompson owned a grocery store called Thompson's Grocery Store on Old Greenville Road. The store was later moved in front of their new house and called Thompson's Snack Shop. Around 1960, he decided to start his own logging company and named it Thompson's Logging Company. He had 22 men working for him. Thompson was one of the first black men to start a logging company in eastern North Carolina. He serviced Beaufort, Martin, Pitt, and surrounding counties. He also sold lumber to Younce and Ralph Lumber Co. Warehouse in Plymouth. Thompson was also on the board of directors for Caterpillar Inc. in New Bern. In 1971, he came down with the pneumonia and decided to come out of the logging business. He started to attend Martin County Community College in 1973 for Upholstery and Interior Design. He graduated around 1974 and started his own upholstery business. He named it Thompson's Upholstery.

Thompson had a lot of passion for gospel music and guitars. He

taught himself how to play guitar in 1953. Around 1958, Thompson started a gospel group called the Five Voices, and he was the guitar player and lead singer for 10 years. He continued to play guitar all his life. He loved to sing and play his favorite song, "I Don't Want to Lose My Faith in the Lord."

The first church Thompson attended was at the Church of God in Washington Heights, but he left that church and moved; he said he was called by God to do other things. Thompson started a lead mission named Harvest Mission and held Sunday School; that building is still there today. Thompson held a "Meeting Place" in 1981 to talk about finding a building for a church to have small

services; there were only nine members at the time. Even though they were small in number, they continued to work together and move forward. His wife said that, in 1982, Thompson stated, "God led me to a building in Vanceboro, NC." This building was no ordinary building; it was formally a "hid-e-hoe" club. To the members of the church, they didn't look at this place as a good choice to have church. His wife said that Thompson kept telling the members, "This will be our church soon, just keep believing." He kept going to the owner asking him would he sell the building but the man said, "No." Thompson went back home and prayed to God to open the owner's heart up to sell the build-





ing. When he went back to the man again to ask him if he would sell the building, the man said, "I will think about it." Once again Thompson went back home again to pray about it, and five days later, the owner came back and said, "I will sell the building to you, but if you ever decide to sell the building , sell it to me." Thompson said yes. All the members conducted one of their last meetings at the "Meeting Place" to decide what the name of the church would be. His son, Minister Rickey Thompson, came up with the name St. John Holiness Church, and all members voted for that name. Thompson always wanted a place where people could be free to serve the Lord however they wanted to because some churches you go to, sometimes a person isn't allowed to praise the Lord how he or she

wants to. The church didn't have an inside bathroom, so they had to use an outside toilet. Bishop Thompson tried to get an inspector in New Bern issue a permit for a septic tank. No one in that area had a sewage line at that time. After his permit was issued, Bishop Thompson and his members started working on building a bathroom and renovating the building. The church started to grow more and more, inside and out. In 1984, the second bathroom was built with a men's restroom and a women's restroom.

Thompson's son Rickey started to get sick in 1994. He stayed in the hospital for about week. When the hospital released him, Thompson and his son went to Thompson's Upholstery and waited for his wife, Pearlie to get off from work. Rickey walked in

the shop and fell dead in his father's arms. Thompson called 9-1-1, but there was nothing they could do. Thompson thought that his hardships were over, but this was just the beginning.

Around 1999, Thompson was at his business, working as usual, when he stepped on a nail. He didn't notice it for about seven days. He had no feeling in his left foot, so he walked around not knowing about the injury at the bottom of his foot. His wife loved to put on his shoes to walk outside, but when she put those same shoes on and the nail went through her foot, the difference was that she felt it. She hollered and looked at the bottom of her foot. Blood was gushing out. After she bandaged her foot, something told her to look under her husband's foot. There she found the puncture wound the nail had left. He went to the doctor, and they opened and cleaned the wound. Then it became infected with gangrene. He had diabetes as well, so the decision was made to amputate his leg. He stayed in the hospital for about a week. After the doctor released him, he still didn't give up. He kept moving and trying to get better. He went to church in a wheelchair until he fully got his strength back and could walk with his pros-

thetic leg. Nothing could stop him from moving forward; he always kept the faith. However, Thompson still had some troubles coming ahead.

Later that year, Thompson was at church in Vanceboro, having service, when he received an upsetting phone call about Thompson's Upholstery. It had caught on fire due to the fuse box and old wires. Thompson felt down but still kept his faith and trust in God. He still keep a smile on his face like everything was okay. They ended service and rushed to Washington. Thompson stated in an article in the Daily News, "I can't put into words the thoughts that ran through my mind as I watched the family business go down into flames." People from all over the place were coming by, taking pictures and writing stories. But most of all, people were lending a helping hand. B.E. "Googie" Singleton, the owner of B.E. Singleton and Sons of Washington and St. Clair Trucking, came through with helping rebuilding. By January 1, 2000, Thompson's Upholstery and Auto Sales had been rebuilt with a new name and purpose, not only doing upholstery but selling cars too. His son, Jesse, stated that Thompson decided to take some work load off of his self and let Jesse

take over the business. Thompson didn't stop working, though; he still kept doing more of the things that he loved.

He started a garden on the side of his house. Thompson, his wife, and his granddaughter would work to grow collard greens, corn, cabbages, green beans, potatoes, squashes, watermelons, and cantaloupes. He had grapevines and plum, apple, and pear trees too. It always kept everyone busy. Thompson always loved growing different foods for his family and to help others that didn't have any food. His wife, Pearlie, helped in

preserving the food in jars and cans.

Thompson didn't let anything keep him away from all the things he wanted and loved to do in life. He always put his trust in God because Thompson knew that He would take care of it. Thompson's faith was very strong, and he had no doubt about it. He loved his family very much and continued his devotion until January 4, 2006 when he died. Thompson left behind his wife, Pearlie Thompson, his son, Jesse E. Thompson, and three grandchildren.



Heriburto Chavez

Latrell Broughton

On a cold March day, I take another trip downtown to one of my favorite bakeries, La Perla Panaderia. Although it is not too well known in the area like other eateries, it has some of the best sweets in town. As I walk in, I'm greeted with the familiar aroma of all kinds of delicious baked goods. I take my time filling my bag with things like churros, sweet breads, and cookies. After my items are rung up by the counter girl, the owner, Heriburto Chavez, emerges from the back room where the cakes are baked and greets me with a handshake.

Chavez always seems to have a hint of a smile on his face. He is short in stature, and etched on his face, there are lines that look as if they came from constant laughing. But I could also see wrinkles and a hint of gray hair that made him seem slightly older than his 39 years. As he sat down with me, he was still wearing his baking attire, as if he was prepared to

return to the back of the bakery and tend to the cakes at any given time. He also seemed uneasy at the beginning, but as the interview progressed, he seemed to let his guard down and warm up to me slightly. Since he does not speak much English, my friend (who is also an employee at his bakery) acted as our translator. Before the interview started, they had a brief exchange with each other in Spanish. It ended with the both of them laughing, which made their relationship seem closer to a familial rela-

tionship rather than a business relationship.

Chavez grew up in Tamaulipas, Mexico, which is along the north-eastern coast of the country. The city he hails from is called Ciudad Mante (sometimes referred to as simply Mante), which is in the southern part of the state. Ciudad Mante is largely an agricultural city and produces many crops like tomatoes, lemons, and beans. The area is also well known for its swimming holes, and Chavez himself says when he was a child, he liked to play around in water, particularly puddles (something that caused both me and the translator to laugh). Chavez also says that when he grew up, he found that he could not afford to go to school, so he opted to work in a bakery with his brother. It is here where he learned everything about his craft. He also owned his own bakery in Ciudad Mante, and he laughingly said that it didn't have a name (it was just called bakery, which





is common in that area). Chavez said that he eventually got tired of making bread in Mexico, so he decided to emigrate to the United States.

Mr. Chavez did not immediately move to North Carolina, however, and he resided in Florida for six years. While he was living there, he found work as a farmer, and his crops included tobacco, oranges, and blueberries. While he did not own the farm itself, he made enough money to sustain himself. He did not come to North Carolina until 1993 when he decided to move to Washington because of the already large Latino population in the area. This is what inspired him to open up a Hispanic bakery (he thought that it would be easy to operate a successful Hispanic bakery if there were already a large amount of Hispanics in the

area). Chavez describes his recipes as “part traditional and part his own thing,” and it seems to work well for him. Many customers with diverse backgrounds visit the bakery daily to fill up on sweets.

When I asked him about the transition from operating a bakery in Mexico to operating a bakery in eastern North Carolina, Chavez said that it has not been an easy one. He told me that everything is “calmer” in Mexico. He explained that in his home country, there was a lot less pressure, and here, he feels as if his customers expect a little too much. I believe this is because while in Mexico, Chavez’s business did not have to be labeled a “Hispanic bakery” per se, it was just labeled as another bakery. He did not have to worry about being a novelty business while he was in Ciudad Mante; all that was expected from him was that he made bread and sweets. If the customers were not satisfied, they could just go to another bakery in the area, which is not the case in Washington. Since he owns the only authentic Hispanic bakery in the

area, his customers expect more because they have no alternative.

But no matter how high the pressure, Chavez seems to be thriving. Every day, his windows are filled with fresh bread, cookies, pastries, and other sweets. He says his favorite part of operating the bakery is seeing the windows filled with a large variety of breads and sweets, and he also says that he enjoys seeing his customers’ faces when he presents them with a cake that he and his employees have made for them—a cake that is a product of hours of meticulous design to make sure that everything is perfect.

La Perla Panaderia is one of Washington’s hidden gems, and its authentic Hispanic goods are second to none. Chavez and his employees work hard to ensure that their customers are satisfied but somehow manage to keep a light-hearted atmosphere in the bakery.

Drop by to enjoy a churro or a sugar cookie; it tastes all the sweeter when you know how much hard work it takes to produce it.

Lavelle Barrett

“I’m From Where the Hammers Rung”

Martina Latham

Born and raised in one of the biggest boroughs of New York, Brooklyn, Lavelle Barrett feels a close connection to famous entertainer Sean Carter, better known as Jay-Z. For the most part, Lavelle was a city boy, but eventually he had the chance to experience the southern life. From Brooklyn, New York all the way down to Farmville, North Carolina, he would come to stay with his grandmother. The big city life runs hard through his veins, but the small southern hometown of Farmville also resides within his heart, coexisting as one.

Raised by a single parent along with four older brothers, life in Brooklyn was bitter sweet. “On one hand, I had four older brothers who would protect me and teach me all that they knew of how to be a man. On the other hand, I had four older brothers who would



kick my butt at any given chance, just because they felt like it,” he said. His brothers were Anthony,

Randy, Russell, and Michael Barrett. “I was the tallest and skinniest out of all of them, which made

older guys who did not know me see me as a threat, and that's how the fights would happen," Lavelle explained.

At first, it was all fun and games to get into a scuffle with a rival group of kids on the opposite side of the apartment complex that he lived in. "I lived in the Tilden, and the building housed many different families. There are surrounding apartment buildings in the same neighborhood that housed our rival enemies," Lavelle said. "The older I became, the

Lavelle hung with got into more and more fights every week. "Many of my friends were being jumped by 6-8 guys at one time, and the same would be returned to the person who started the fight with my friends," he said. That was until Herm was bullied into a corner by the other group of kids in the neighborhood and was beaten with wooden bats. The altercation left him with a broken leg, rib and hip. He was hospitalized for six months with a swollen face that almost unrecognizable. Revenge was on all

that time) with a gunshot wound to the head. I have seen women beaten and then put out on the street by their so-called boyfriend to find a way to bring home money for the night," Lavelle said. "New York is a hard life that doesn't take kindly to weaklings." he said. These events changed his life.

"Brooklyn was a wake-up call to realizing that there has to be a better way of life especially for our youth." Lavelle said. "But the south was where my mom would have rather for me to be rather than up

"It was the summer of 1989, and I thought that my childhood could have not gotten any worse."

more severe the fights began, and that is when Brooklyn was at her meanest." As far as friends, he hung out with a select few that he trusted: Greg, Herm, Anthony and Rob.

The pranks no longer just consisted of water balloons being dropped on them from the top of a six story building or throwing a giant bowl of grease and powder on someone in the elevator. "These tricks were normal for a lot of the kids in the neighborhood, but soon the fun turned to hatred," he explained. One by one, the boys

the boys' minds, and revenge they would seek.

"It was the summer of 1989, and I thought that my childhood could have not gotten any worse after seeing one of my friends recover from being jumped," Lavelle said. The next few weeks became the week of yellow tape. He saw what most people would only see on television.

"I have seen people get shot or stabbed right in the apartment complex that I lived in. I have walked up to an elevator and seen a teenage kid (the same age I was at

in the big city." Being around so much violence started to worry his mother, and she didn't want him to be a part of the same lifestyle. "I had always visited my grandmother down in the Carolinas so I was used to both places, but I love Brooklyn because it is my home. It is where I learned about the harshness of life and how easily it can be taken away from you. It is where I learned how to survive," he explained.

Lavelle's oldest brother was shot and killed by someone trying to rob him, and that was the day

his life changed forever. "I felt so alone and without hope once I realized that the protector of the family was no longer there to carry the burden of life's harsh treatment. We all had to carry our own burden now, and I no longer chose to be a kid," Lavelle explained. "Anthony Barrett was my idol, father figure and mostly the provider of the family. Anthony was a licensed barber and taught me everything about street life." All the Barrett boys looked up to Anthony and depended on him, even their mom. Shortly after, the brothers began to take flight and leave the nest. Russell ended up in Yonkers, Randy went to Manhattan, and Michael went down south to stay with their grandmother. Lavelle stayed to look after his mother since he was the youngest of the brothers.

Things didn't get any better over the next few years. Being a single mother of five boys can be a bit much for any person. She was a young woman with the weight of the world on her shoulders. The stress of raising children in a dangerous city and alone was a heavy burden that led to hospitalization for about six months. Around the same time that Ms. Barrett was in the hospital, Lavelle was attending P.S. 9, which is an automotive

school for high school students in Brooklyn. High school was the time that you either showed who you were or you would be left standing alone with no friends. Back then, it was all about the little group of people that you affiliated with. His friend Rob was a senior and in the JROTC group, so he had plenty of friends. "Because Rob was older and he already had many friends, our small group merged in with his," Lavelle said. "I basically breezed through high school until my last year, and I was the last of the group to graduate." Toward the end of Lavelle's senior year, he became a young man on his own. Lavelle's mom was released from the hospital but never returned back to the apartment. He was not working, so Lavelle could not keep the lights on or pay the rent. Eviction notices were posted every month, and he would go to court to explain what was happening. The court would grant him an extension, but soon Lavelle grew tired of doing it because he felt alone and betrayed. "My mother didn't come back to the apartment, and I didn't have my brothers with me for support," he said. "The pressure had built up within me, and I wanted to crawl into a hole and just die. I wanted to see my grandmother, the only

person who could console me."

It took a while to get the money but finally, there was enough rounded up for a one-way Amtrak ticket to Rocky Mount, North Carolina. (Four years later, his mom also moved to North Carolina). Lavelle thought that he knew somewhat about the south, but that was only the summer visits that he saw. "I had never experienced a Christmas or a Thanksgiving in Farmville. My grandmother (Daisy Barrett) would cook so much food, and it seemed that the entire neighborhood would come and get a plate from her." She would always make sure that the kids in the neighborhood who were less fortunate had something to eat." Lavelle said. "This is the point in my life where I realized that I wanted to help make a true difference. It started with the youth because the young people are the future," Lavelle said.

Lavelle soon found employment at DSM in Greenville. He worked there for a while, and he enjoyed the pay but hated the isolation. He soon met a lady named Alice Stancil. She was married to Danny Stancil, the pastor of New Vision Ministries. The Stancils own a child daycare and have a deep compassion and love for children. This encounter was the push

that he needed. Mrs. Alice would always check on Lavelle, and soon he learned how intelligent and caring she was. When Mrs. Alice needed some help with grant writing, she asked if Lavelle knew anything about it. He had never tried but took a shot at it. He enjoyed every moment of it.

From there, he volunteered to come in and read to the children

To help ensure that this organization will be a complete success, Lavelle is currently taking courses at Pitt Community College for Business Administration. He will be finishing next semester, and he plans to continue on to Fayetteville State University. All the education that Lavelle is receiving will help give him the extra boost in building a great organization. It

Even with the rugged lifestyle from the city, Lavelle has managed to keep an open mind and heart for children. In the south, there is no such thing as the hustle and bustle. In the south, a child is given the chance to have an actual childhood. There is less crime than a child could be around. The southern lifestyle is less competitive. The city is fast paced and never sleeps, which doesn't allow many children a chance to breathe. Despite the life that he has had, Lavelle sees the opportunity that youth have here. He has a determination within him to create a place for those who want better.

Lavelle understands that parents may not be able to always have the funds or the know how to help children. If his organization can help a family in time of need, that is all the satisfaction that he needs. "A smile on a child's face is payment enough, especially when that smile is as bright as the sun," he said. "I don't see myself as a role model, but the accomplishments that have so far come about will push me to be one."

"A lot of youth that are overlooked are in the worst parts of city."

three times a week. Being around the kids was an enjoyment that he really took to heart, but he felt that he could still do more. "I started seeing a need that I could be a part of and had the help of a few friends," Lavelle said. He decided to start a non-profit organization. So far he has been able to have a food drive and clothing drive that has helped a few families. "My organization is very new, and I am still getting a feel for things," he said. He has a few people who volunteer, such as his brother Mike along with friends Trina, William and Teresa. They were able to get over 50 school shirts and pants out to the youth in Greenville for 2012.

will also help him with building relationships with the community that he will be helping. Lavelle will be able to understand the youth and relate to those who have or are having a hard time in life. His youth was a harsh period in his life, but he was able to find a way to stay positive and strive for a life other than what he was brought up in. The acronym for his organization is G.H.E.T.T.O. It stands for Giving Help Everywhere to Those Overlooked. "I was raised in the ghetto, but I am not ghetto," Lavelle said. "The name speaks for itself. I want to help any way or anywhere I can. A lot of youth that are overlooked are in the worst parts of city (the ghetto)."

Anyone that is interested in being a part of his non-profit organization can contact Lavelle by phone at (252) 367-4955 or email at biplavell@yahoo.com. Volunteers are always welcome.

Farmville Dogwood Festival

Martina Latham

For the past 26 years, the Dogwood festival has been a great extravaganza that takes place in the small town of Farmville, North Carolina. The Farmville Dogwood Festival came about in 1988 when Mayor Edna Earle Baker wanted to substitute an event for the discontinued Farmer's Day. Dogwood festivals are held in five North Carolina cities: Farmville located in Pitt County, Fayetteville located in Cumberland County, Lake Lure located in the town of Rutherford, Mebane located in Alamance County, and Statesville located in Iredell County. All of the festivals celebrate North Carolina's state flower, the dogwood, and they are held in the month of April when the trees are blooming. The trees make the festival more attractive, and the fragrances fill the air. Anyone who has been in Farmville knows exactly when the festival is coming because

the flowers on the town commons are the indicator of the event.

The three-and-a-half-day, family-oriented event attracts up to 40,000 people and functions as a town reunion. The Farmville festival features about 40 musical groups performing all types of music, from bluegrass to reggae. Other attractions have included celebrity storytelling, a petting zoo, arts and crafts shows, mounted drill team, antique car exhibitions, and a Civil War reenactment. There are multiple activity centers around the gazebo, such as face painting, a petting zoo, and water coloring on the town commons. The Dogwood Fes-

tival has been honored as a legacy festival by the Library of Congress. The arts and crafts are the main focal point of the festival because this gives eastern North Carolina artisans a chance to show their artworks. Along with the exquisite art works that the festival has to offer, there is something for all ages. For the youth, there is a kid's corner. The Kids Cool festival tent allows the kids to come in and show off their talent in the arts and crafts section. Children are allowed to create items free of charge, of course. The streets are lined with different types of foods from vendors from all over who have traveled to be a part of the Dogwood extravaganza.

There is a variety of foods, music, and people for all to enjoy.

*For more information on the Dogwood Festival, please visit
www.farmvilledogwoodfest.com.*



Naomi Fulcher

“Right Here on the Pamlico”

Kelly Dwyer

Mrs. Naomi Fulcher has lived in Washington for over forty-six years. Growing up as farmers in Gum Neck, North Carolina, she and her family grew soybeans, corn, and potatoes on three farms that they owned.

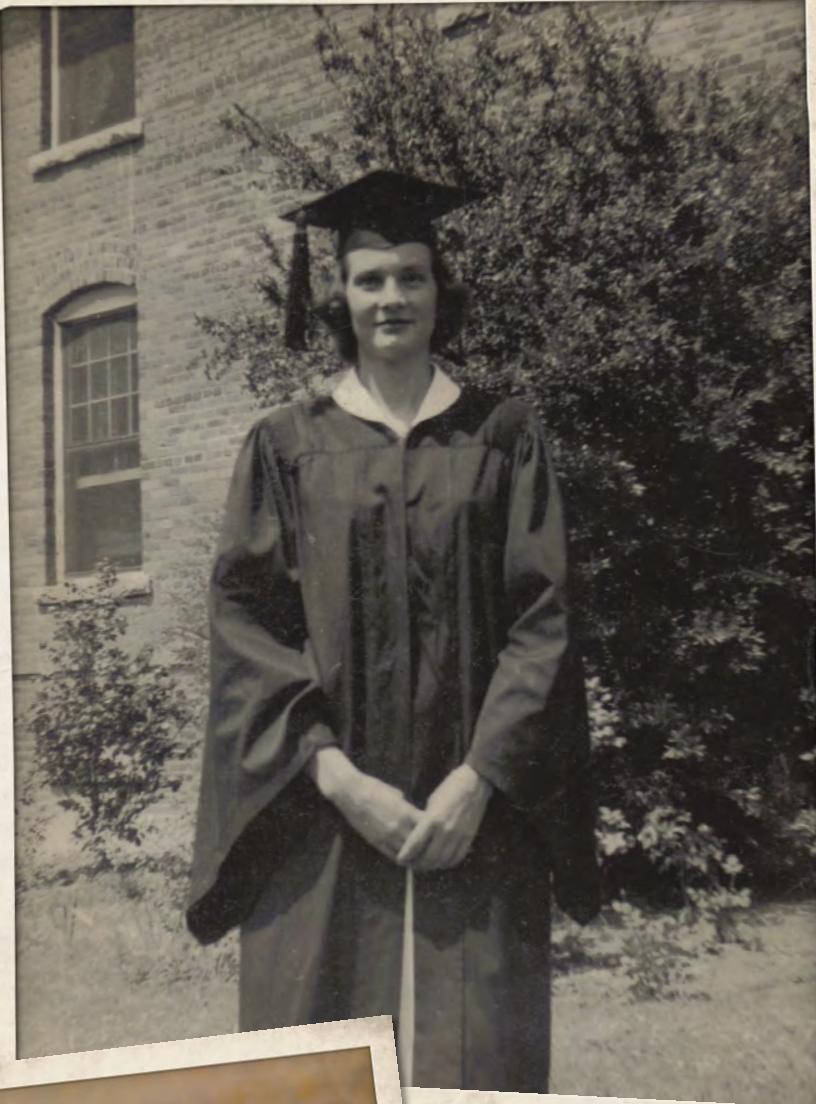
Fulcher speaks about her childhood, “When I was young, the only other place we went other than school and church was going to Columbia on Saturday nights and see a cowboy movie.” This is a decidedly different childhood from what most kids experience today. Church seems to be a reason that pushed her towards the pursuit of teaching. “Well, I've always loved children, and I had taught Sunday School for children younger than I was for several years ... even before I was ten years old. And I've always loved children,” she says about her decision to go into teaching. Fulcher eventually went on to East



Carolina University in 1948 and graduated in 1952 with a degree in Education.

After finishing at East Carolina, Fulcher went on to teach in Roanoke Rapids, Crestfall ,and Chocowinity over the next thirty-one years. "I taught mainly first grade and Kindergarten, and for three years, I taught a combination group of Kindergarteners, first graders, and second graders mixed together. You know, in a small single-wide trailer. Also, at that same time, I had the teacher's assistant, and I was also training a teacher. So, it was quite a squeezed up place. But the children learned, and I enjoyed it," she explains.

Fulcher recalls a particular incident about a boy throwing a temper tantrum in class. "So after



he had kicked all the children in the classroom, one time or another, and then he kicked the teacher's assistant, the student teacher, and last of all he kicked me. So when he kicked me, I kicked him back (so very lightly) and told to go immediately straight

home and tell his parents that he had done and what I did. And after a little while, he calmed down and was okay. By the end of school that day, he was happy as could be and left."

Today, Fulcher has retired from teaching. Her children are grown,

and she spends her time volunteering at the local Methodist church. She is hopeful about her future in the Washington. "Being here all these years, I still don't know of another place I'd rather be than right here, on the Pamlico," she says.

Washington Community Care Coalition

Kelly Dwyer

The Washington Community Care Coalition was established by six people in 1982 under the name "Christmas Cheer." It now serves the community every Christmas by giving out food baskets to those to need them. Currently, there are five members, not including myself.

I started to work there around 2009, and I have attended every bi-weekly meeting since then. I mainly got involved because my mother badgered me about having something to do. Meetings consist of trying to get funding, planning fundraisers, getting

materials for fundraisers, etc. Fundraisers for the organization typically involve fish fries and raffles. We are constantly on the edge of not having enough money and dissolving the organization. But somehow, every Christmas, we manage to get the boxes ready.

The boxes typically consist of a small frozen turkey, a couple cans of staple vegetables, dried beans, rice, and powdered ice tea. We often go to churches and ask about families who need assistance during the holiday season. We also go directly to the families themselves and ask if they need

help. In addition to the boxes, we deliver during the days during the holiday season when Meals on Wheels doesn't.

I hope in the future we will have enough money that we can help those who come to us during the holidays. But for now, we're constantly fight to justify the existence of the organization. We will still continue to serve the Washington community until the end.

Anyone who would like to make a donation or is interested learning more about the organization can contact us at: (252) 946-3906 or at (252) 402-5655.

©MFCman's Brushes
ASilvia
Do not remove this tag

José Jimenez

"An Immigrant's Journey"

Alonza Lee

*I*t's one of those types of places that you pass everyday but never take note of unless you smoke or live in that neighborhood and need to buy a phone or pay for the service on your phone without the headaches of dealing with the big companies. José Jimenez's shop is one of those places.

Jimenez is a 25-year-old entrepreneur who opened up his small shop about a year and half ago. It is located off John Small Avenue in Washington, N.C. next to Pam's Diner. It is a modest-looking place with cellular phone and cigarette banners hanging in the windows. Those are the main things he sells at his shop, but once you go inside, you will find an eclectic mix of products. For example, he sells the usual snack items, such as chips, sodas, candies, and energy drinks, but he also has things like cellular phone accessories and clothing.



His stock is eclectic in response to his business plan, which is simply to get the customers what they want. People will come into his shop and mention to him that they wish he'd sell this or that, and Jimenez will try to get it for them. This way of thinking has made him money and created a loyal customer base in the neighborhood he serves.

Jimenez's journey to entrepreneurship began when his father came to the United States in the mid-1980s and then brought him

Around that time, he became interested in cars and became a car enthusiast. So, he went back to Pitt Community College and earned a mechanics certificate. He now restores cars as a hobby.

After earning his certificates, Jimenez got a job in retail sales. He started working for T-Mobile in Greenville where he got his first experience handling cell phone accounts. He later went to work with Amazing Super Discounts in Greenville where he learned to repair and program cell phones. This

store. Officers had responded to the store's alarm and found someone in his store. When they reviewed the security tape, they realized the man had broken into the store and injured himself trying to get out when he realized the police were outside. He could not get out the way he got in and ended up caught. This gave Jimenez an idea of what he might have to deal with in the event of a burglary.

Jimenez's shop is called J6 Tobacco & Wireless. The shop's name came from the first letter of his

He has come a long way from that scared little boy on a plane ride to his new home in the United States.

and his two brothers over around 1990. Jimenez was 2 years old when he came to the United States. His dominate memory of the trip was "I remember being really scared." When he first got here, he spent time with his grandmother in Florida before he came to eastern North Carolina. Once his family settled in, his younger brother was born, which brought the number of his immediate family members to six. Jimenez attended school in Washington and graduated in 2006. He then attended Pitt Community College where he earned his welding certificate.

job led to his interest in sales, and that's when he started to float to his family the idea about opening his own business. He took what he acquired from his sales job and began talking with people he knew that had started businesses of their own. He learned about the permits and how much startup money he needed.

He also learned about the downside to owning a store from one of his friends who related a burglary story to him. About five months ago, Jimenez's friend got a call at around 2 a.m. from the police, asking him to come to the

family name and the number of his immediate family members (Jimenez 6). J6 is not the typical Mexican-owned shop or store. Because Jimenez was raised in the U.S., his shop does not reflect his Mexican background at all. His store reflects his American upbringing in that the shop is stocked with American products and things one can find typically find in any American store like his. However, that could change over time because his parents might want to interject a little slice of home by stocking things that are purely part of their Mexican cul-



ture.

When asked what he plans for the future, Jimenez responded, "I am going to expand the store." He plans to move into the building next to his and add more products. He says, "I plan to become a North Carolina Education Lottery retailer, and I plan to start selling

beer." (That's what his customers want.) He and his wife also plan to become naturalized citizens within the next 5 years, a problem his son and baby brother do not have because they were born here. Jimenez relates, "I have lived here most of my life, and I view myself as American. I vaguely remember

**"I have lived here most of my life,
and I view myself as American.
I vaguely remember Mexico."**

Mexico."

In conclusion, Jimenez and his family's story are typical of Mexican immigrants. He is doing well here and has practically lived here his entire life. He went to school here, graduated here, went through secondary school here, got married here, and has a child here. He has made friends here and managed to become a well-liked and respected small business owner here. He has come a long way from that scared little boy on a plane ride to his new home in the United States.

Goat Showing

A Family Tradition

Zachary Cuthrell

As a young boy, I was always told that I need to follow in my families' footsteps and get involved with livestock. Little did I know that it would open a door to a whole new life, a life full of excitement and an outrageous amount of learning. Though I did follow in their footsteps, I couldn't be exactly the same. I became interested in goats and began to raise them for livestock shows... unexpectedly. It started out as just keeping one as a pet and here I am, 25 goats later, raising my own personal show herd.

It all started when I was about six years old. My older sister had been involved in livestock from about the same age, and she is 10 years older than I am. She began showing a breed of sheep called the Suffolk. In my early years, she always pushed me to show sheep, but I just never found the interest.



Then one day, a committee meeting for our county show was held and goats were introduced to the show.

Many people are not even aware of what exactly a livestock show consists of. A livestock show, depending on where it is located, is an exposition of a species or multiple species of livestock. The

showmen are judged along with the animal that is being exhibited. The show person is judged by his techniques of exhibiting the animal to the judge. The judge is "calling the shots." Eye contact, body position, and knowledge of the animal that is being shown are three keys points to the showmanship aspect of livestock shows. Then the ani-

mals are judged. The biggest and most competitive part of a live-stock show is the breeder and market classes. The animals are judged based solely on the bone and muscle structure of the animal and how well that the animal will be able to yield. Yield for livestock can be one of three things. In males, the yield can either be the actual meat from the animal or the offspring of the Sire (father). In females, the yield is how well they will be able to breed and carry the offspring.

The livestock show in Washington County is for youth from the age of six to 18 years old. I'm currently 18 years old and closing in on the end of my showing career, but the road doesn't end completely; now it's time for a detour. I'm going to miss the county show terribly, but with the fresh showman coming up, there is still hope for the future of our show. I will personally be passing the torch to my younger brother to continue on the Cuthrell legacy.

As for now, the North Carolina State Fair will be where I continue my show career, and hopefully, it continues on to the AGBA (American Boer Goat Association) show where points are earned and add value to the animals being shown.

In the many years of raising Boer goats now, I have personally come across a lot of interesting information. For starters, the most popular breed of goat in the world is the Boer goat. Once a wild species in South Africa, it has been domesticated internationally and utilized to now provide sixty-three percent of the red meat in the world. They have many traits, but the one that stands out the most in the world is the traditional color scheme of most Boer goats. The majority of the Boer goats have white bodies with dark colored heads, mainly red. The reasoning for this color scheme is environmental adaptation. The white body makes them very visible on the mountainside or hillside in heavily wooded areas of where they were originally bred. The red head is for pigment. The pigment in their skin keeps them protected from ultraviolet rays and helps prevent skin cancer.

In all my years of showing if there is one thing that I have learned and can apply in everyday life, it is definitely the responsibility of raising the animal from birth to show and then maintaining the animal after its show career is over for breeding purposes. It takes a lot of time and hard work to maintain a herd of goats. The

Showing goats has been a life changing experience and will continue to be part of my life for many years to come.

shots and medications that are given have to be given periodically, and with twenty-five head of livestock, it takes anywhere from 1 week to 6 months to go through with all of the vaccinations.

Showing goats has been a life changing experience and will continue to be part of my life for many years to come, but best of all, the learning comes along with the enjoyment and family traditions that will be passed on to future generations. I know my children will be involved with it as well. It is a great opportunity to teach life lessons and responsibility as well as an activity to make a profit. I highly recommend getting involved in livestock. I know if I started as a six year old boy and climbed through the ranks anyone can.

Legend of the Screaming Bridge

Robin Walker

Folklorists each have their own definition of what makes an urban legend a legend. Urban legends are modern stories with little or no supporting evidence that spread in various forms. They often contain elements of humor, morals, and horror. They are usually spread by word of mouth and sometimes are never proven truthful. Urban legends are often told to scare people or play jokes on them. One Eastern North Carolina legend that is interesting is the Screaming Bridge.

The Screaming Bridge is set along Smithwick Creek, about one-half mile off Holly Springs Church Road in Williamston, North Carolina. One story about the Screaming Bridge was written in *North Carolina's Eastern Living Magazine* by Sarah Hodges. "I had lived in Farm Life most of my

life and heard the stories about the legend, and thought it would be an interesting to write about," Sarah said.

For her story, she interviewed a man by the name of B.F. Lilley, and he shared the story of the ghostly structure, as he has heard it:

"This boy and girl were to get married around the time of the Civil War. The young man was sent off to fight. But he got the chance to come back home, possibly on furlough. And when he did, he found her (his fiancée) having a big time with Union soldiers who were passing through. Supposedly he took her to the creek where he kept sticking her head under the water to drown her. And she'd come up and scream every time."

Today, as the legend goes, you can still hear the girl's screams, especially if you visit

the bridge at night. When asked if she went to the bridge and if she heard the screams, Sarah said, "Yes, I went, but I did not hear them." Of course, many people have said, "If you go looking for it, you won't hear it."

The tale of the Screaming Bridge has not really affected the daily lives of people in Farm Life (the rural area around Williamston), but it has provided ammunition to scare their friends and dates on dark nights. Perhaps if local people knew who the woman was that died, people may have a different reaction to the story.

Even though there is no real proof that the event even happened, it will continue on as a local urban legend told by grandparents to their grandchildren and used by teens to scare one another on dark, spooky nights.

Debbie Everett

"I Want To Do More"

Valerie Everett

"I

want to do more."

Ms. Debbie Everett said during an interview when asked why she has decided to pursue another master's degree at the age of 58. "Ever since I was a little girl, I've always liked helping people and with an advanced degree, I will be able to help in ways I cannot right now." Everett considers herself a lifetime learner and has spent a good part of the last 20 years advancing her degree. Everett's diverse employment has also given her insight into different areas of health care. She has worked with children and with the elderly; she has been a nurse on the floor of the hospital and an administrator. Through her various roles, she has learned the good and bad of being a nurse and strives every day to make improvements in patient care.

Everett grew up in Lewiston, North Carolina. Born May 25, 1955



as Deborah Ann Bunch, she was the youngest of three children and the only girl born to Eugene and Essie Bunch. Having two older

brothers, she considered herself very much a "tom boy." Growing up, a lot of her time was spent gardening, fishing, water skiing, and



playing football. Her family had a place on the Chowan River where she learned to swim and water ski. When asked what she remembered most about her childhood, she responded, "Watching Westerns at my grandmother's on a black and white TV." She also pointed out this was a time when they didn't have air conditioners. Her father had his own pattern making business, and her mother was a homemaker.

Everett recalled reading a book about a Nurse Practitioner in the library when she was in the 9th grade and deciding that was what she wanted to do when she grew up. She attended high school at Roanoke-Chowan Academy and graduated in 1973 with honors. However, her dream of becoming a Nurse Practitioner was put aside when she married and started a family.

Everett met David Lee Everett in Lewiston; they would marry in 1973. After marrying, they moved to his hometown of Hamilton, NC. Over the next four years, they would have three children: Dave, Valerie, and Jill. Another daughter, Meredith, was born in 1995. Everett was very active in her children's lives. She was involved in the PTA and volunteered at school. She also helped coach the little league baseball team. Family vacations were spent at Harker's Island almost every summer, where the family would enjoy fishing, finding sand dollars, and having picnics at Cape Lookout.

To help support a growing family, Everett held a variety of jobs before pursuing her Nursing de-

gree. She worked at the local bank from 1974-1986. In 1985, she was elected as a town commissioner and served from 1986-1987. In 1986, she opened a craft shop and florist. Most of the products sold in the shop were made by blind craftsmen. The blind-made crafts program was originally operated by the state. When the state elected to close it, she and her brother in law, Roy Everett, who was blind, took over operations. They had ten to twelve craftsmen from wood-workers to seamstresses who made products. The products were marketed via catalog sales and a craft shop, which they opened in Hamilton. They won the Governor's award at the State Fair for their display in the late 1980s. The shop



did well at first but ultimately closed in 1991. To supplement her income, Everett sold insurance from 1988-1991.

In 1986, she became a volunteer for CHAPS (Community Health Advocacy Program). While volunteering, she helped people get Medicaid, food stamps, and set up transportation services as needed. When asked why she volunteered for CHAPS, she said, "Because I like helping people." She volunteered until 1990. In 1991, Debbie decided it was time to finally pursue that nursing degree.

She enrolled in Edgecombe Community College and graduated in 1993 with an associate's degree in nursing. She chose Edgecombe because it was a local college and she "liked their brochure the best." After graduation, she took and passed her nursing board exam and began working at Pitt County Memorial Hospital, where she worked until 1996. She took a couple months off after leaving the hospital. Later, she worked at a dialysis office for a few months, but it didn't really peak her interest.

In 1997, Everett started working for Martin County Community Action Head Start Program where she worked as the Health Director, serving 569 kids until 2005. At the



urging of the Head Start Director, she went back to school in 2001, taking general college courses at various community colleges with her eye on transitioning into East Carolina University's Master's program in nursing. In 2003, she was accepted into ECU's RN to BSN program and worked on BSN courses for a couple of years. She was accepted into ECU's RN to MSN program and graduated in

2011 with a Master's degree in Clinical Nurse Specialist, focusing on diabetes. She chose to focus on diabetes because her brother-in-law had Type I diabetes, and she wanted to learn more about it.

In 2005, she started working at Martin General Hospital in Williamston and has a variety of titles including Education and Clinical Recruitment Director, Community CARES Champion, Occupational

“I will work and help others for as long as I am able.”

Health Director, and Interim Employee Health Director. She works with doctors to develop Continuing Medical Education Programs and represents the hospital in community activities and at health fairs. She also speaks at community events. In addition to her duties at the hospital, she works for hospice and teaches Medication Aide classes at Martin Community College. “I really enjoy teaching,” Everett says.

Just recently, Everett has been accepted into the MSN program at ECU for Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner, which she should complete in three semesters. “I realized I couldn’t do what I wanted to in Martin County with the degree I currently have,” she explained. Her plan is to matriculate into the Doctorate of Nursing Practice program. “When I get done, I would like to open a chronic care clinic in Martin County and teach on the side.”

Outside of school and work, Everett is a loving wife, mother, and grandmamma. She and David just celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. She has five grand-

children and four dogs who keep her busy. She enjoys working in the yard and plants a garden every year; Everett said, “I love having fresh tomatoes, squash and cucumbers right out of the garden.” She often cans her vegetables and makes pickles every year. Another passion of hers is cooking. The family especially loves her Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners. She spends two days cooking and does it all by herself, refusing help from anyone and often running everyone out of the kitchen. She enjoys playing the piano, and she used to oil paint until she realized the paint was causing her migraines. She has a love for jewelry and clothes. One of her favorite

local places to visit is Cape Lookout. She hasn’t had many opportunities to travel, but she did take her first out of the country trip in 2008 when she visited the Mediterranean. In 2011, she took her first trip to New York City where she got to see her first Broadway show and a New York Yankees baseball game.

Everett will be starting the Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner program this Fall and is looking forward to learning more and being able to apply what she learns in her various roles. When asked if she ever has any plans of retiring, she said, “Not any time soon. I will work and help others for as long as I am able.”



Mattie Virginia McCray

"Just a Little Bit of Faith"

Stephanye Norman

Ever wondered what it would be like to live over a century? Have you ever wondered what it's like to die twice and still be blessed to see another day? Well, Mrs. Mattie Virginia McCray has lived past 100 years old, and she still talks and acts as though she's still in her younger days. She was given the name "Peter" by her siblings. "I don't know why they would call me that. Peter was a man who denied Christ," she said. Mrs. Matt was born to Mr. James Edward and Lottie Howard in the year of 1911 during the years of racial segregation. Mrs. Matt's father had been born into slavery. Luckily, it ended long before she was born. Her grandparents were from Jamesville, North Carolina, and her great-grandparents resided in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Her longest living relative, Aunt Rebecca, lived to see 112 years old.



Mrs. Matt's an active mother and a member of Shiloh Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, located in a little town known as Skinnersville, North Carolina. Not only is she a member there, but she is also

a member of Bethel Church of Christ. Skinnersville is also where Mrs. Matt was born and raised.

As a child, Mrs. Matt attended Soundside, which was the only African American school in the area.

Mrs. Matt was so eager to peruse her goals toward a better future. In 1918, she dropped out of school in the fourth grade at the age of eight to take care of her siblings while her father and stepmother worked. Out of fourteen siblings, the youngest she had to care for was only eight months old. Mrs. Matt's father had six children by her mother and eight by her stepmother. "I remember I use to take my stepmother's two boys on each of my hips down a path that lead to Shiloh," she said. As if caring for her siblings at a young age wasn't

students, such as she, often had to walk at least four miles to get there. When she decided to quit school, she asked God to give her children her talents to further their education because she had too much to do, which kept her from furthering her education. Today she still lives by her dreams that all of her children and grandchildren strive for a better education than what she has. Mrs. Matt continues to pray for her grandchildren and others to have much success in school as well as encouraging them to do better and go after their

farm land. As a hard working father of twenty, he did what he had to do for his family. "I worked for forty years on my father's tobacco field and started caring for a white lady's children," she said. According to Mrs. Matt, her father tended to their family farm until his death when the farm was taken over by a young white female. The family tried getting the farm back, but it cost too much for the family to settle it in court.

Unlike her father, Mrs. Matt only had only eight children to provide for. Children are one of

"I remember I use to take my stepmother's two boys on each of my hips down a path that lead to Shiloh."

hard enough, she also had other duties. Her duties consisted of cooking and cleaning.

According to Mrs. Matt, "Back in the day, having a higher education wasn't as important as it is today. If you completed twelfth grade, you were considered as a higher educated student, which is considered as a college level student today." When she did attend school, Mrs. Matt wasn't as blessed as children are today. She had to walk to school along with others because there weren't any busses running for them. The Soundside

goals. Not only is education important to her, at the age of 101, she is still willing to learn and do new things just to stay active.

While she was out of school, Mrs. Matt worked in conjunction with her parents on their private farm in their backyard. Things were going good for her family until she was fifteen years old when her father lost their farm due to his excessive drinking. Though the times may have been hard, they managed and maintained a stable home. After a while, her father quit drinking and purchased more

the most precious gifts from God, and Mrs. Matt was willing to do anything for her children. She had four sons and four daughters from three husbands. Mrs. Matt had two girls that were diagnosed with a disease called spinal meningitis. Spinal meningitis is inflammation of the tissue surrounding the spinal cord.

Unfortunately, only one daughter was able to survive this disease. Her other child died in her arms at the age of four, but her surviving daughter is now seventy-two years old.



Mrs. Matt married the first time at the age of eighteen, but it only lasted for five or six months. Her first husband, George Harris, left her pregnant and alone. He never returned. Being a single mom is one of the toughest jobs there is. "After a while, I was willing to court again; after having a few talks and dates, I remarried again." She was married to Mr. Willie Norman for six years until his death. Mrs. Matt had two girls during this marriage. Subsequent to Mr. Norman's death, she decided to try this marriage idea one more time. "I decided to settle down

with him, and later on I had my last set of children with Raleigh McCray," she said.

Mr. McCray was a "railroad man." He and Mrs. Matt loved each other very much and did everything together. They were simply inseparable. Their love was a living love story. Since they were very religious, she followed her husband and joined the Old Bethel Church of Christ located in another small town called Bethel. Just when she thought it would last forever, God had another plan. McCray had an abscess on his brain, and he died in 1987 at the age of 68. When asked,

"Are you looking for anymore husbands in the future?" Mrs. Matt laughed with the prettiest and unforgettable smile and simply said, "The only husband I need is Jesus! Besides I'm too old to cut the mustard." (The meaning of "too old to cut the mustard" is that one is too old to have intercourse.) As a mother of eight, she remained active and faithful to her husband, Jesus.

If one thinks having three husbands is impressive, another interesting thing about Mrs. Matt is that despite her age, she stays busy. She knew all of the latest dances well into her 90s. In her spare time, she attends the Washington County Senior Citizen Center twice a week and maybe even more if there is something else going on. She used to hang around that area before the building was ever built. "I went to the Senior Citizen building before it was even there," she said. At the Washington County Senior Citizen Center, older people are able to learn how to sew, exercise, dance, crochet, and a host of other things. Mrs. Matt did all of the latest dances, played bingo, and participated in the arts and crafts that were offered over the years. Not only does she do those activities at the center, but she sings with its choir as

well. However, now that she is advancing in age, she attends the center only on the days her health allows her to.

One might be surprised to learn how much Mrs. Matt really likes to dance. "Back in the day, I use to sit them down. I could do any dance in the book," she said. "I had a ball!" Mrs. Matt stated that one of her favorite dances was the Boogaloo. The Boogaloo was a freestyle Fad dance in the 1960s. The dance includes simple movements using one's feet, hips, and body. Mrs. Matt enjoys her time at the Senior Citizen's center because as a child her father didn't allow her or her siblings to go to Piccolo Joints, or places where people went to dance and have fun. Not only does she enjoy going to the center, but she also enjoys traveling, attending church, playing bingo, and talking to her friends and family.

Mrs. Matt likes having fun, and she enjoys being with family and friends as well as helping others. To be a woman of 101, Mrs. Matt has accomplished a lot in her life. Mrs. Matt was asked to sing a solo of "Just a Little Bit of Faith" at the age of 94 during a Christmas program at Hebrew Baptist Church Faith. "I don't sing it all the time, but I will sing it upon request," she said. On another occasion, her

great-grandson from New York needed her as a reference for a report on "Yesteryear." He asked her questions and compiled her answers. His teacher gave him an "A" for it right on the spot. Since Mrs. Matt is so loving and caring, she also accepted an invitation to honor one of her nephew's at Plymouth High School (in Washington County) at the age of eighty-seven. And, when she turned 100 years old, she received a certificate from the "Railroad Men" for celebrating 100 years of age and being

married to a "Railroad" man. She is still doing great things and continuing to serve her lord and savor.

Though Mrs. Matt has seen and accomplished a lot of things, her condition has slowed her down. In 1998, Mrs. Matt fell in her daughter's basement and hit her head. As a result, she ended up with two tumors on each side of her brain and broke both of her wrists and her back. She ended up staying in Vidant Medical Center of Greenville (formally known as Pitt County Memorial Hospital)



“I’m gifted by God. I’m able to stop the blood of someone that was bleeding. I make a person that’s been burned stop burning.”

for three months. During those three months, Mrs. Matt was in a coma for two weeks. When she came out of the coma, her first words were, “I want a cup of coffee!” Mrs. Matt is such a precious gift given to all of us from God.

Since Mrs. Matt is a committed and a faithful Christian, many believe God has blessed her with a special gift. “I’m gifted by God. I’m able to stop the blood of someone that was bleeding. I make a person that’s been burned stop burning,” she said. Her daughter Margaret says she witnessed many amazing things that have occurred with her mother. As her daughter stated, “I have seen my mother quote a Bible verse to someone that had excessive bleeding, and it suddenly slowed down and eventually stopped bleeding. When someone was badly burned, she quoted another Bible verse to stop it from burning. As she quoted the verse, the burn suddenly stopped burning and water would appear.” It would seem that Mrs. Matt is truly touched by God.

Like many people, I hope that

I’m able to live as long as Mrs. Mattie Virginia McCray. When one lives faithfully through Christ, one will be blessed with longevity. Although she’s been through segregation, Mrs. Matt loves everyone and she doesn’t see race. “I used to help anyone I could help, young or old, it didn’t matter. They would offer me money. I wouldn’t take it, but I

would come back and see about ‘em,” she said. If one’s in the town of Roper in Washington County, one should stop in and sit down for a chat. It’s an experience one will never regret.

She is filled with so much wisdom and spiritual love, it leaves one wanting to come back for more laughs and knowledge.



Lonnie Hodges, Jr.

Between Belhaven and Brunswick

P J Harris

Sometimes it's hard to tell a man's story without telling most, if not all, of his father's, especially when the two are close. It becomes even harder when they work together for most of their lives like Lonnie Lee Hodges Jr. and his father did.

On July 22, 1928, Lonnie and Zelma Hodges had their first child, a boy, in a house on Water Street in Washington, NC and named him after his father. Lonnie Lee Hodges Jr. would spend the first five years of his life here before his father, generally referred to as Capt. Lonnie, moved them to Elizabeth City to go into business with his brother, Claude Hodges. His father, like his uncle, was in the oyster business, and between them, the two had a small fleet of oyster boats which they used to form the Hodges Bros. Oyster Company.



During that time, the family continued to grow, and Lonnie Jr. saw the addition of two younger siblings, Ralph Wallace Hodges

and Joyce Madaleine Hodges. The oyster company fared well for about three years, but the oyster business in the Albemarle Sound

started to dwindle, prompting the brothers to close shop. With this decision, the Captain decided to return his family and boats to Washington once again. They would only stay here for a year, though, due in part to a house fire consuming their residence and the rise of another business prospect elsewhere.

It was 1938, and Lonnie was now 10 when the family made the move thirty miles east to Belhaven, NC where his father had just bought an oyster house from

which to run his fleet and process their pull in. Around this time, his Uncle Claude also moved his family to Belhaven to go into business with his brother once again. Together, the two started up another oyster company called Hodges Oyster Company this time and started canning oysters for wholesale and retail sales. Over the following years, his father bought multiple other businesses in town, such as a dry cleaner, bowling alley, and pool room, and the young Lonnie helped out at these busi-

nesses and the oyster house from time to time.

Lonnie was just 13 years old when the United States entered World War II, but he remembers the changes that it brought even to a small town like Belhaven. With the war came rations on supplies, such as sugar, coffee, and tobacco, and tickets for gas supplies. Things picked up for Hodges Oyster Company and some of the other family businesses, such as the Belhaven Canning Company, at the time, though, because they were receiving contracts from the government in order to feed the servicemen and nation. Lonnie says that the gas rationing part wasn't as bad for him as it was for many others because his father would get a huge tank filled up monthly by the government to maintain food shipments, and Lonnie would just take some from it when he wanted to drive around or go out on a date.

In June of 1945, Lonnie graduated from John A. Wilkerson High School in Belhaven as a member of the last class to graduate before the addition of the 12th grade. Despite only being 17 at the time, talks of a final wave of drafts to help finish the war were floating around, and it seemed as though even he might be drafted. President Truman's decision to drop the



Lonnie says that the shrimp were surely around before then but no one really knew what they were and weren't trying to catch them.

atomic bomb on Japan changed everything, though, and proved to quickly wrap up the war, so the draft that Lonnie feared might come to take him never came. With the threat of the draft now gone, he, along with his cousin C.D., Claude's son, and a few other boys from Belhaven went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to attend school. While there, he and C.D. were both going for degrees in Business Administration. However, all of them would stay there for less than 2½ years due to the talks of another war.

By 1948, conflicts in the Pacific were starting to brew once again and the threat of being drafted into the service started to loom overhead again. Lonnie remembers how two of the boys from Belhaven at UNC, Bill Penner and Bill Harrell, went down to Florida and joined the Navy because they didn't want to be drafted into the

Army. He and C.D. chose to stay home and work with their fathers though, thinking that they would inevitably be drafted anyway. After a few months, the draft seemed as though it had all been talk and the boys decided to continue their studies but did not return to Chapel Hill. Instead, they both went to Norfolk, Virginia to attend the Norfolk Business University, but each left after just a year there due to dissatisfaction.

By the time Lonnie returned home from Norfolk, the Hodges' had expanded their businesses in Belhaven once more. The first of these was the introduction of a tomato canning operation to the Belhaven Canning Company, which was largely fed from over 500 acres of farmland growing the fruit in neighboring Hyde County. The other addition was a crab processing plant, which was built out over the water of Pungo Creek where the boats could easily bring

their pull of crabs in. There they would be picked of their meat, and it would then be packaged for sale and shipped out. Lonnie started helping at the businesses as he had before, driving trucks some days and oystering on others. He fondly remembers having to drive up to Baltimore with a truck of iced down oysters more than a few times during this time.

Oyster boats were all still sail-powered at this time, but Lonnie says that the oysters were so plentiful in the area that a boat could leave from Belhaven in the morning and be back in town for the men to catch the midnight screening at the theater in town with around 200 tubs full of oysters on deck. Back then, a tub was also 5 pecks instead of the 4 peck bushels of today and this kind of daily pull-in was phenomenal in its own time. All this kept the Hodges Oyster Company in good business, especially with around 13 boats on the water. Fortune rarely shines forever, though, and in 1948, a bad storm either destroyed or covered up all of the oyster beds in the area while a freak fire claimed the Belhaven Canning Company in 1949. Lonnie says that the storm and the effects it had on the oyster business signaled the end of the sailboat era for commercial fisherman

in the area.

As with all things, though, a new era emerged from the death of the old and so came the birth of the trawler and shrimping industry in the area. Lonnie says that the shrimp were surely around before then but no one really knew what they were and weren't trying to catch them. He even remembers his grandfather telling him that he didn't know what they were, but that he'd "seen them so thick down some of the canals that they looked like maggots in the water." However, the little critters quickly became the next "big thing" with a steady demand for them coming from restaurants in large cities like New York City that wanted to serve this new delicacy.

With such a high demand,

shrimping was now the business to be in, so that's where the Hodges and crew went. They started converting some of their sailboats into trawlers by cutting off their large center mast poles and sails and outfitting the boats with gasoline engines. If the mast was long enough on one of them, Lonnie says it wasn't odd for them to use it to make the boom for the newly converted trawler. Those that they didn't convert, they took up north to the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland area where boats like the skipjacks were still needed for oystering and sold them. Even after this, the Captain still had a good number of boats on the water and had Lonnie go work on one called the Mildred for a shrimping season. The 2nd season that he was on the

Mildred, Lonnie took over as its acting captain.

In 1949, after the Belhaven Canning Company fire, the Captain and Zelma bought a 200 acre farm down in Hyde County and moved there to tend to it. They raised mostly corn and soybeans in the fields and raised hogs. "They fared pretty well farming down there," Lonnie says. They also built an oyster house on Germantown Bay and ran their own remaining boats, including the Mildred, from it while down there. At the time, Lonnie was mainly shrimping and selling his haul to groups for a profit while his father bought oysters from the local fisherman to sell after shucking to larger companies, such as George Clark's operation in Belhaven.

In 1950, the Korean conflict finally escalated into battle and another wave of drafts came to supply the service with troops, and so Lonnie was finally called in by a draft. Suddenly, he was in the Army and stationed at Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina as a member of the Adjunct General Core. He stayed a member of it for the two years that he was in the service and managed to never be sent overseas or see any combat duty. His job as he explained it was to train the troops stationed at



Fort Jackson that were heading over to fight on the frontlines and such. He remembers that it was Thanksgiving Day that he went into the service in 1950 and that it was that same exact day that he got out of it in 1952. When he returned from the service, he became the captain of the Mildred once again and returned to the simple shrimping life he had before.

Times were good for a while after this, but bad fortune struck again when Hurricane Hazel came through the area in 1955. The monstrous storm put both the Mildred and another one of the family's boats, the Percy Shores, up on land and flattened the oyster house on Germantown Bay. Luckily, as the waters were receding, they managed to get the Percy Shores back into the water. The Mildred, however, would stay on the shore for nearly a year before returning to work on the water. Lonnie says that sometime during the storm it had become wedged against an oak tree, and the bulky ship proved to be just too heavy to move from its place in the quickly receding waters as they had with the Percy Shores.

After Hazel, the government started offering aid for damage from the storm and the Captain



got a \$20,000 loan from the Small Business Association (SBA) to help him and his sons get the Mildred back into the water and running. They built a cradle around the boat in order to move it from where it was lodged back into the water and bought a new motor for it. After they got it back into water, Lonnie's brother, Ralph, took it and followed a local shrimper, Harry North, to Key West, Florida to start shrimping there. Lonnie, however, continued to shrimp in the local area and work with the family as he had been. Within a few years, the family had also

moved back to Belhaven after losing the farm to bills and poor harvests. Lonnie remembers how nothing would grow but a few inches high out in the fields before dying after Hazel hit because of all the salt and silt that it had deposited on top of them. They tried cotton once after it but ended up with less than half the crop they had planted.

Upon their return to Belhaven, Lonnie and his father opened up a crab picking operation in their old oyster house. They ran it for several years but eventually closed it due in part to competition. At the

By now, the dreaded draft board was no longer interested in Lonnie.

time, Belhaven had two other crab picking operations, the Blue Channel Company and the Belhaven Fish & Oyster Company, running. Lonnie says, "We had to offer [the crab fishermen] a bit more for their crabs to get some of them to switch over to us when we started out." When they did finally close the doors on this operation, Lonnie returned to shrimping while his father stayed at the oyster house doing repairs to boats and fixing others things for the locals.

By now, the dreaded draft board was no longer interested in Lonnie, who had served his term as they saw it, but it seemed they were steadily after his brother, Ralph. Lonnie says that while Ralph did eventually go and face them, he spent a while moving between Florida and North Carolina as they became aware of him at either place. After being cleared and told he didn't have to serve

because of high blood pressure, Ralph decided to stay home and get married.

The shrimp grounds and business that Ralph had tapped into down in Key West at the time were just too good to give up, though, so Lonnie headed there in his place to captain the trusty Mildred once again. To get there, he took a train all the way from Wilson, North Carolina to Miami, Florida and then took a bus to Key West because the railway to there from Miami had been destroyed by a storm some years before. He spent around three years shrimping there before returning home to Belhaven. Part of the reason behind this return was because around 1959 or 1960 the shrimping business in Key West started to dwindle. The main reason, though, was that the SBA was starting to seize boats over the loans that it had given out after Hurricane Hazel. The Mildred as well as the Percy Shores, still running out of Belhaven, were both tied up in these loans and thus seized for the failure of full payment of the loans. This left him without a boat to operate in Key West or even bring back home as he was forced to surrender the Mildred there.

Upon his return, the family finished what was owed on the

loan but still lost the Mildred in the process. They were, however, able to buy the Percy Shores back from the government. Lonnie says that many others lost boats in a similar process around the same time and some managed to get theirs back like they had. He remembers that there was one man that he knew down in Florida that lost four boats to the SBA over loans. After buying the Percy Shores back, they bought another boat called the Robert W. Cole and started work on it. They changed the single motor boat over to a dual motor boat on their own boat railway and had Ralph do the diesel work for them.

In 1962 or 1963, he headed to Brunswick, Georgia to start shrimping there. He remembers that he hadn't been there long before the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He said that he heard about it the day after it happened on the dock he pulled into. Being as the fall season is the best for shrimping in those waters, Lonnie would sometimes come back and work the summer in North Carolina and sometimes spend the winter in Florida repainting and repairing the boats. In the mid-1960s, they decided to sell the Robert W. Cole, and a man in Washington bought it. After that,

Lonnie and Ralph started to buy bigger boats together. Among these was the Warhorse, a 76ft boat with an 8ft draft that they bought from a Brunswick bank, which had repossessed it. He says that it was a good boat, but because of its deep draft, he had to always take it out into deep waters to move it anywhere because it was just too much for some of the shallow channels and inlets. The following years were filled with much of the same schedule of moving between Belhaven and Brunswick to shrimp the different seasons for Lonnie.

In 1976, Lonnie met his future wife, Ruby, and the two eventually got married on Nov. 29, 1980. His father sadly wouldn't get to see his eldest son get married, though, as he passed away Dec. 27, 1979 at the age of 81. Lonnie and Ruby moved back to Belhaven and settled down there with Lonnie finally tired of the constant traveling after so many years. He brought some of the boats from Brunswick back with him, such as the Miss Liz, while he let his in-law, Lloyd Harris, take the Warhorse to Key West to shrimp in those waters.

Back in Belhaven, Lonnie crabbed for a number of years while also running a rail service on the boat railway for local fisher-

men. He'd crab out in the river and come back to shore if he wasn't already there and either put in or pull out someone's boat on the railway depending on what they needed. He would also do small repairs to them as his father had in his old age if the boats needed them. Around this time, he was also starting to draw social security and eventually quit crabbing altogether. In 1996, his mother passed away at 91. Over the following years, multiple storms have filled in most of the boat railway, and he had to quit running it and finally go into a retirement of sorts.

In 2003, they tore down both his own house and his parent's old house and built a new one where the latter was located. A year later on Jun 19, 2004, Ruby passed away. These days he likes to reminiscence about the old days when he can and stays active as much as possible.

It's no surprise that Lonnie settled into commercial fishing with as much of the business as had been in the family up to then. He still owns the oyster house and the boat railway, but the premises acts more as a storage building these days.



The Belhaven Canning Company

P J Harris

Offices in Annapolis
1511 Main
Lo and room 1st flg

In 1938, two brothers, Lonnie and Claude Hodges, opened up Hodges Oyster Company on the Belhaven waterfront. Soon after this, they opened the Belhaven Canning Company as a means to can their oysters and sell them on both the wholesale and retail markets. They bought cans from the Continental Can Company and leased a canning machine from Tin & Steel out of Baltimore, Maryland to start things off. They started selling most of their products to the Thomas & Howard Company, who distributed them widely, for a percentage of each case. Some of their products, mainly the oysters, were still sold on consignment, though. As the years progressed, they branched out into canning other products, such as herring roe, tomatoes, and crabs.

Oysters were easily the company's biggest seller, and because they had different

types coming from different places, they processed each differently. If the oysters came off one of the Hodges' boats or from the Pamlico Sound area, then they were first shucked and then separated according to size. Smaller oysters were

labeled as "regular" during the process while larger ones were put aside and marketed as "select." These oysters were then packed raw into one gallon cans and put on ice before they were shipped up to Baltimore by truck.





At the same time, one of the brothers' siblings, Ralph Hodges, was buying oysters from the Bogue Banks and Morehead City area for the company to can. These oysters were different from those coming out of the local waters and were often referred to as cat-tongue or coon oysters. They were generally long and slender in shape as opposed to the small fattish oval shape of the oysters coming from the Pamlico Sound. When these arrived at the plant, they were shucked but weren't divided since they were all around the same size. They were then placed into one pint cans and would have a top placed on them by a canning machine so they could be put

on shelves and sold in stores.

The company expanded into canning herring roe within its first few years and put it for sale to the public. Herring were abundant in the local area then, and many fishermen were catching and corning, a form of pickling done with salt, the fish for sale on an individual basis. Many of these fishermen knew that the roe within the fish was marketable, but it was virtually useless to them in the small amounts they each got from their catch, so it would just be cut out and thrown away. To collect the herring roe, the brothers' would send one of their sons out with an iced-down truck to go and buy it from the fisherman. They

would go all over from Edenton to Creswell to Columbia and other parts of Tyrell County to buy the substance. To keep it cool during the trip, they would place it into the gallon cans the company used for oysters and put the cans on ice. When they got back to the canning plant, women workers would skim the roe to pull out anything that wasn't supposed to be in it and then put it into small cans to be canned by the canning machine.

As the years went by, the company also went into canning tomatoes and crab for sale. The tomato operation was mainly fed from 500 acres of farmland in Hyde County growing the fruit as well as lo-

cal farmers who sold their harvests to the company. Many of those grown for the company were Marlboro and Rutger tomatoes that they bought from South Georgia to plant and grow. At the plant, the tomatoes were put onto a series of conveyor belts, most of which the brothers' themselves had designed, that would run them through the canning operation. First, they would go through a scalding bath, which used hot steam from a boiler to loosen the skin of the tomato. Then, workers would peel off the skin and place them into cans that would be filled with hot water by an overhead pipe as they continued to the canning machine. After they had their tops put on by the machine, the cans were put into large crates until they were full. Two or three of these crates would then be lowered into a steamer that was sunk in the ground so that they could be cooked in the can. This was done by applying pounds of pressure and steam to the cans. By the next morning, after being removed from the steamer, the cans would be cool enough to touch

and would have the labels put on them by hand before being put into cases to be shipped and sold. There was also a group from out of Florida canning green tomatoes that would be shipped up north and out west in one of the other buildings.

The process for doing crabs was generally like that of doing oysters. One of the main differences between them was that the crab pickers would weigh out how much meat they had picked out and that weight and the time would be logged onto a big board in the plant. This was done so that the company could keep track of the freshness of the meat. Crab meat was generally divided into categories based on where it came from on the crab, but it all went to the same place in the end. The meat would be packed into small one pound cans that would then be loaded into a wooden barrel with ice with about a hundred others. These barrels would then be taken to Rocky Mount, NC or Norfolk, VA to be put on the train to Baltimore or other cities.

Times were good for the Belhaven Canning Company as well as Hedges Oyster Company during World War 2 and the following years. During the war years, the company was selling canned herring roe to the government by the caseload as well as some of their other products. The government was also allotting them ample gas supplies at a time when gas rationing was in place, because they were a food supplier for both the nation and troops. They also became one of the first companies in Eastern North Carolina to buy an industrial size cooler for production and seafood purposes.

In 1948, part of the business declined as the oyster beds were wiped out or covered up by a bad storm. The canning company continued operations, though, until the next year when a freak fire claimed the premises. At that point, the brothers decided to try other ventures with Lonnie moving to Hyde County to manage a farm he'd just bought while Claude went to Edenton and started a dragline business.

Life on the Pamlico is produced
as the final project of
HUM 120 Cultural Studies
at Beaufort County Community College:

This course introduces the distinctive features of a particular culture. Topics include art, history, music, literature, politics, philosophy, and religion. Upon completion, students should be able to appreciate the unique character of the study culture. This course has been approved to satisfy the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement general education core requirement in humanities/fine arts.

For more information about this publication or the course,
or to offer comments or suggestions,
please contact Suzanne Stotesbury
at suzannes@beaufortccc.edu.

For a high-resolution, print-quality copy of this digital publication,
or for information about purchasing a professionally printed copy,
please contact James E. Casey
at jamesc@beaufortccc.edu.

Archives of previous issues are available at
www.beaufortccc.edu/lotp.

Life on the Pamlico video is available at
www.youtube.com/lifeonthepamlico

Editor Suzanne Stotesbury and her students would like to extend a special thanks to the BCCC Writing Center. Throughout the semester, Writing Center tutors and staff provided valuable information and assistance to the students while they working on Life on the Pamlico. Through their guidance and assistance, our class was able to write the very best of its abilities. Thank you!



BCCC Cultural Studies Spring 2013

